Lifelong educator Dr. John B. Joyner passes away. PAGE 3
FAA awards CPA $7.6M in supplemental funds. PAGE 4

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Saipan Tribune

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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38 charges vs Torres withdrawn

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Kingman

The lawyer prosecuting the case against former governor Ralph DLG Torres, assistant attorney general James R. Kingman, has withdrawn the 38 additional charges he wanted to file against Torres, citing the judge's decision to quash the prosecution's subpoena for Torres' Bank of Guam records.

In a motion to withdraw-request for leave to amend information dated July 18, 2023, Kingman withdrew the charges of contempt, misconduct in public office, and

See CHARGES on Page 4

Gas prices up 15 cents

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After more than two months of steady fuel prices, Mobil Oil Marianas broke the streak yesterday with a 15-cent increase, with the CNMI's other fuel supplier, Shell Marianas, expected to follow suit today.

Mobil's Extra fuel increased from $5.119 per gallon to $5.269 per gallon. Mobil's Supreme fuel also increased from $5.569 to $5.719 and diesel increased from $5.439 per gallon to

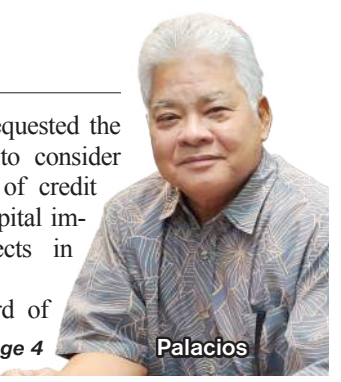
See GAS on Page 4

LEIGH GASES
Mobil Oil Marianas increased its fuel prices yesterday as seen in this photo of the Susupe Mobil gas station.

Palacios asks MPLT for $20M line of credit

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN
Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:
71

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER


Palacios

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios has requested the Marianas Public Land Trust to consider extending a $20-million line of credit for several federally funded capital improvement/infrastructure projects in order to raise revenues.

In his letter to MPLT board of

See PALACIOS on Page 4

John Pangelinan aka "DJ SUN" of KWAW Magic 100.3 in San Jose.
CHRYSTAL MARINO

Wire thieves interrupt radio broadcast

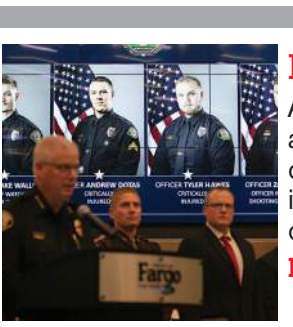
By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
Correspondent

Local broadcasting was suddenly cut off yesterday at the KWAW Magic 100.3 station in San Jose after copper wire was stolen from the station's transmitter site, leaving the station scrambling at the unexpected dead air.

See WIRE on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Puerto Rico Bento has slowly become the go-to take-away restaurant/snack bar on the island.
PAGE 14



NATION
An armed man ambushes officers who were investigating a routine crash, killing one.
PAGE 15

LIFE & STYLE
Jason Aldean's latest music video for "Try That In A Small Town" lasted just one weekend on CMT.
PAGE 19

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Local

House Ways and Means to cut $200K from Legislature leadership accounts

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Members of the House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee agreed Wednesday to slash $100,000 from the leadership accounts of both the House and Senate—for a total of $200,000—in the proposed fiscal year 2024 budget of the CNMI government.

For this fiscal year 2023, the Senate and the House each has $200,000 in their leadership accounts, or a total of $400,000. For fiscal year 2024, both houses are initially allocated the same amount of $200,000 each, for a total of $400,000. Minus $200,000 means that both houses will have $200,000 each in the fiscal year 2024 budget.

Committee vice chair Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (Ind-Saipan) said that, after a Ways and Means Committee meeting on the fiscal year 2024 budget, they understand that that they will be cutting the leadership account by $100,000 for both the House and the Senate.

"…Our speaker is here with us and he's also in agreement that if the cuts are going to happen here in the Legislature, we can put that into the pot that shall be distributed to other entities," Attao said.

No one opposed Attao's motion.

Another cost-cutting proposal is to cut the salaries of Cabinet secretaries that are over the cap, said committee chair Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan).

Yumul said they, however, don't have any rough number for that and if the resident directors for Tinian and Rota are going to be included in the cuts.

Attao said that what Yumul is asking are the statutory salaries of the Cabinet members and if any of them are above their salary schedule. He said there is a statute that placed them in a different salary schedule.

"So if they're above, what the chairman is saying is that we should consider putting them back to the original salary schedule for all Cabinets, including the municipality Cabinets," Attao added.

Yumul said he will leave that matter of salaries on the table until they get a rough number from their fiscal analyst of its impact on the budget.

The chairman said by now they have a body of a proposed budget bill and they will have their legislative assistant write up the budget bill and they will return on Monday.

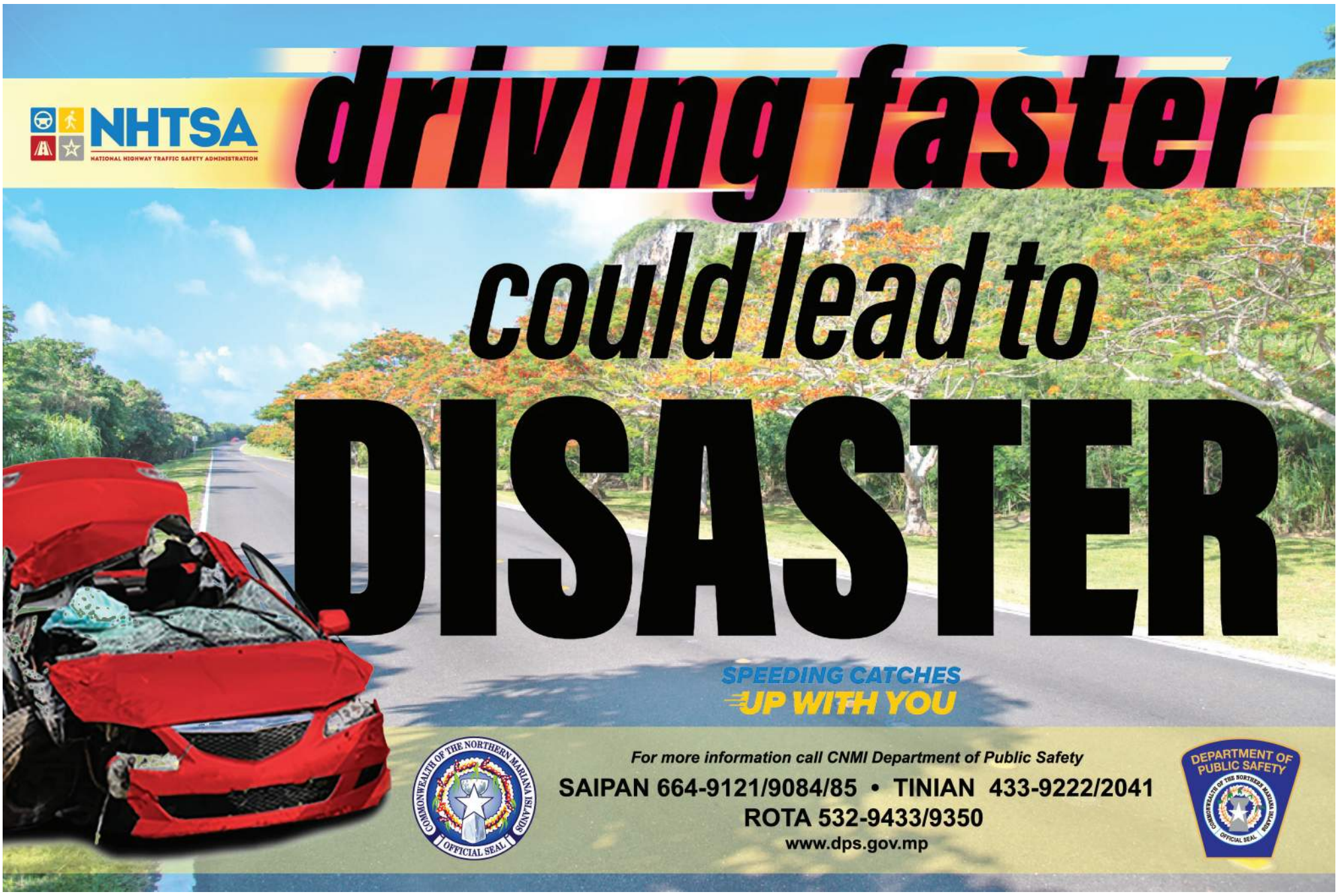
Yumul said the legislative assistant should start writing the budget bill and then they can discuss and move the funds around.

"By now at least we are in agreement with certain provisions. We agreed to the leadership cuts, the statutory salaries," he said.

Yumul asked their staff to compile the data for statutory salaries, including the salaries for resident directors for Tinian and Rota, before they vote on that matter.

He said they will be discussing other taxes, while they wait for the data to come in.

Yumul said he will be calling for a budget meeting on Monday as soon as they get the draft bill.



Lifelong educator Dr. John B. Joyner passes away

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Dr. John Bersener Joyner, who was a distinguished speech pathologist and a well-respected educator and principal who devoted his life to lifelong learning and education, passed away on July 18, 2023, at his residence in Kagman surrounded by loved ones. He leaves behind a remarkable legacy that will be cherished by the countless lives he touched.

He was born on May 8 and was in his 90's at the time of his death.

He left behind his wife, Yasuko, and their four children: Jian, Jehn, Jawn, and Jon.

Dr. Joyner was a speech pathologist whose legacy of compassion, knowledge, and impact on the field of education will never be forgotten. He became the principal of Northern Marianas International School in 2015 and quickly became known for his visionary leadership and dedication to his students. He firmly believed in the power of education to transform lives and promote a better society.

Throughout his career, Dr. Joyner encouraged his students and colleagues to embrace the value of "lifelong learning." He believed that education should extend beyond the classroom and nurture intellectual curiosity and personal growth throughout life's journey.

Dr. Joyner not only excelled in academia but also demonstrated a deep compassion for those around him. He mentored countless students and his office was always open to those seeking guidance and reassurance. He also instilled in his students a sense of social responsibility and encouraged them to give back to their communities.

"His memory will continue to inspire generations of educators and learners to approach life with intellectual curiosity, compassion, and a commitment to improving the world of education. Rest in eternal peace, Dr. John B. Joyner. Your love for learning will forever inspire us," said an NMIS staff.

Prior to his role at NMIS, Dr. Joyner was an adjunct professor at the Northern Marianas College from 2013 to 2015, where he also taught full time from 2000 to 2002.

He was also the former director of the Coastal Resources Management; a mediator at Pacific Mediation; a Cabinet member during former governor Lorenzo Guerrero's administration; chief of the CNMI Division of Immigration; associate dean, assistant professor, and professor at Indiana University; visiting instructor at University of Southern California and Columbia College; and an associate professor at Harvard University.

He also worked in steel mills, on railroad tracks, and construction in the Midwest.

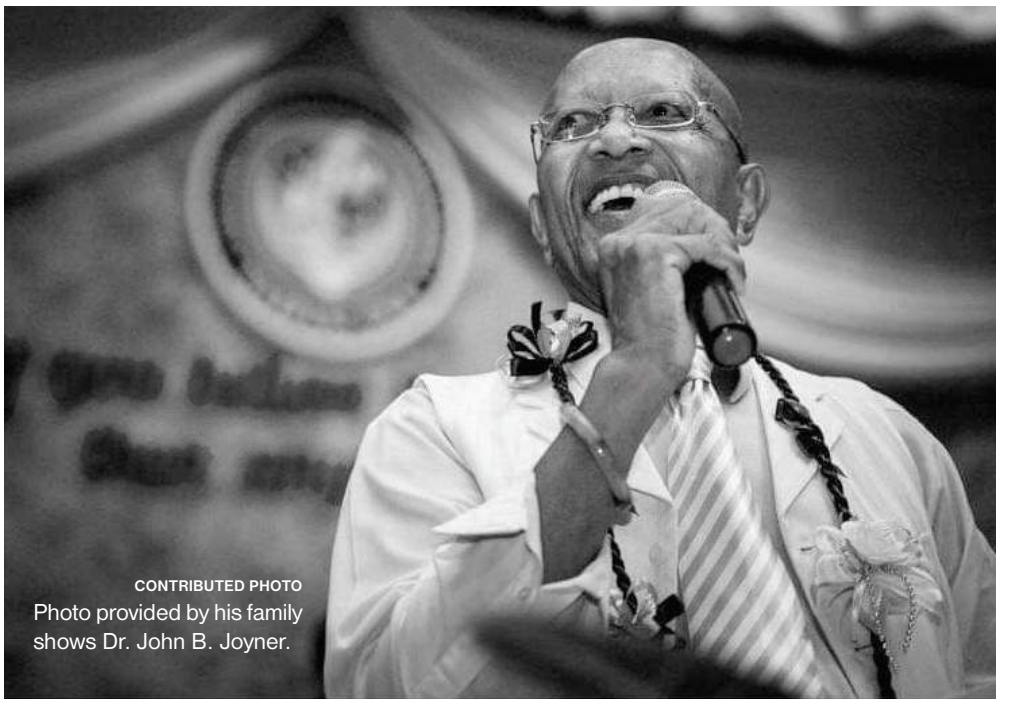
Dr. Joyner received a bachelor's degree in Master Divinity from the Fuller Theological Seminary; and bachelor's degree in Education from Chicago Teachers' College.

For graduate school, he received his master's degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology from the University of Southern California.

He went to elementary school and high school in Gary, Indiana.

In a statement, NMC president Galvin Deleon Guerrero said, "Dr. Joyner was a man of many talents and many skills, all of which benefited our islands. He was a caring teacher, an inspiring leader, and an effective change agent. Above all, his work and his life were rooted in a graceful wisdom that he shared with everyone he worked with. We are a better place because of him, and he will be missed."

His son Jehn's social media post said "Ageless body, timeless mind. A life fully lived. An unmatched legacy of positive energy. Forever in our hearts. Rest in peace, Dr. J."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Photo provided by his family shows Dr. John B. Joyner.

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FAA awards CPA $7.6M in supplemental funds

The Federal Aviation Administration, through FAA Airports District Office manager Gordon Wong, issued last July 12, 2023, its preliminary notice of award of supplemental funds to the Commonwealth Ports Authority in the amount of $7,563,600. The funds are sourced from the FY 2022 Supplemental Discretionary Funds Program, which make additional funds available for airport construction projects.

"We are very pleased with the FAA notice, which is a discretionary award that CPA had to make the case for as to our needs and priorities. We will put together our application package for the airport improvement projects," said CPA executive director Christopher S. Tenorio.

CPA board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds said, "The CPA team is commended by the board as everyone, from custodial staff on up and on all three islands have worked so hard to improve our overall performance. These funds will help to improve our airport facilities. We are far from done, but we are rebuilding and looking to build and do better."

Ongoing projects now include the commuter terminal reconstruction and the commuter terminal road repaving. CPA is undertaking repairs and preventative maintenance work to its loading bridges and support facilities. On Tinian, CPA is completing the renovated and expanded ARFF facility and expanding the parking lot. On Rota, CPA is planning the parking lot expansion and pursuing funding for the airport terminal roof replacement. ***(PR)***

Interior Secretary Haaland on island for a one-day visit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com REPORTER

U.S. Interior Secretary Debra Anne "Deb" Haaland arrived on Saipan yesterday afternoon for a one-day visit.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said he and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang welcomed Haaland at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Haaland, who flew in from Honolulu all the way to Saipan, will also be conducting site visits throughout the island.

Palacios and Apatang will have a scheduled meeting with Haaland today, Friday, at 8am, in the Office of the Governor's conference room.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Haaland's appointment in March 2021, making her the first Native American to serve as a Cabinet secretary.

She served as chair of the New Mexico Democratic Party from 2015 to 2017 as the U.S. representative from New Mexico's first congressional district from 2019 to 2021.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Gov. Arnold I. Palacios welcomes U.S. Interior Secretary Debra Anne "Deb" Haaland at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

PALACIOS

From page 1

trustees chair Phillip Mendiola-Long on Monday, Palacios also requested MPLT to consider lowering the interest rate on the government's existing loan with MPLT that was used to fund various typhoon-related expenditures.

The governor said these proposals will provide "safe, local investment opportunities that not only help current beneficiaries of the trust fund but future generations as well."

Palacios cited the CNMI's challenging financial situation in making the request, saying the $20-million line of credit for the Commonwealth could be a type of bridge financing or advances to cover the costs of the initial stages of construction of these CIP projects.

Saipan Tribune learned that Mendiola-Long hosted a meeting last June 21 among MPLT trustees, Palacios, Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan), and House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) during which they discussed the twin proposals for the line of credit and lowering of the interest rate.

The governor said that, as they discussed during the meeting, the CNMI government is facing significant financial pressures due to a slow economic recovery.

Palacios also blamed the past administration of Ralph DLG Torres for alleged indiscriminate spending of the American Rescue Plan Act funds.

As a consequence, Palacios said, his administration has been forced to cut government programs and operations.

The governor said the Commonwealth has several capital improvement projects throughout Saipan, Tinian, and Rota that are funded on a reimbursable basis by federal grant funds administered by the Economic Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and other federal agencies.

It is expected that these financing or advances will be reimbursed in less than 30 days after the federal agency reimburses the Commonwealth for such costs, Palacios said.

He said they expect this line of credit to be utilized for various projects scheduled to begin simultaneously, which is the reason for the large initial $20-million request.

The governor said the line of credit will be necessary for approximately five to seven years while the infrastructure and other capital improvement projects are under construction.

Palacios requested the MPLT trustees to designate a point of contact so that the administration can provide more information and details on the request that will assist the trustees in making their decision.

On the interest rate matter, the governor said they also discussed at the meeting the possibility of lowering the 7.5% annual interest rate for the government's existing loan with MPLT, which is backed by a guaranteed repayment source from the trust's own annual distributions to the general fund.

As of June 5, 2023, the government's MPLT loan balance is $10.73 million.

Palacios said a lower interest rate would ease the debt service required by the government in this challenging fiscal environment and would still be earning sufficient interest when taking into account the current investment climate and the projected rates of return on alternative investments.

The line of credit request appears to be in line with what Finance Secretary Tracy B. Norita and Reps. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan) and Blas Jonathan T. Attao (Ind-Saipan) had disclosed last week about the need to have a "seed money."

At a hearing for the fiscal year 2024 budget before the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee, Norita said that some $289 million worth of Capital Infrastructure Project funds are in the pipeline and the CNMI government is planning to look for and set aside at least $25 million that can be tapped to get the projects going, while the administration is still working on drawing down the funds.

GAS

From page 1

$5.539 per gallon.

Although competitors, Mobil Oil Marianas and Shell Marianas typically mirror each other's price movements.

The last change in fuel prices was seen on May 9 when gas prices rolled back a total of 20 cents in a span of less than a week.

The CNMI last saw an increase in fuel prices on April 7 when it went up to $5.41 per gallon from $5.26 for regular gasoline.

Local motorists shared their dismay about the increase.

A 59-year-old woman said it was a good thing she gassed up her car just a couple of days ago before the unexpected increase. "It's been a while that gas prices went up or down and I'm glad I was able to buy gas before it went up, but I'm still disappointed that it went up again, considering it's been a while since the last change. I hope it goes down again soon enough," she said.

A 27-year-old man said, "here we go again. I hope it stays at this price for a long time again or at least roll back soon. I just hope it doesn't reach $6 like the last time."

CHARGES

From page 1

perjury pertaining to first-class travel, among others, saying the recent ruling of judge pro tem Arthur Barcinas to grant the defense' motion to quash the subpoena for Torres' bank records makes

"This ruling made it clear what the court's interpretation of pro hac vice means as applied to this case. If the counts of misconduct related to travel—but not even the charged count of theft—is the entire scope of the pro hac vice admission, the court is unlikely to find that including the contempt charge or the 37 other counts will fall therein," Kingman said.

Further, "the court's ruling held that the lack of separate probable cause determination was the most important protection. The CNMI lacks the standard mechanism, the grand jury, which in most jurisdictions is the independent probable cause assessor for both investigatory subpoenas and felony indictments."

In his ruling last July 17, Barcinas stated that he granted the motion to quash the subpoena because the bank records are not relevant to the crimes charged against Torres.

The case against Torres charges him with misconduct in public office and Kingman had said that the subpoena intends to prove that Torres was a public official who completed an illegal act in office. The alleged illegal act that Torres did was violating the restrictions on government-paid travel outside of the CNMI.

"Since felony charges can be brought based on the probable cause assessment of the prosecuting authority through the information system, the special prosecutor made the application under the same theory. Now that theory has been rejected by the court in its ruling to quash the subpoena, the same apparent deficiencies that the court found there would likely apply to the amended information," Kingman said.

In light of the court's ruling, Kingman withdrew his request to amend the information but said he will proceed to prosecute the other charges.

In his request to amend the information last May 5, the proposed amendment included 37 charges that had not been previously brought which include: additional first-class travel, use of public funds for political or campaign activity, perjuring himself in a declaration for government expenditure, illegal reimbursement, theft by deception, theft of utility services, purposeful release of a captive deer, authorizing a special permit for out-of-season collection of coconut crab, and misuse of government transport.

Torres' case was initially filed on April 8, 2022, charging him with 12 counts of misconduct in public office, one count of theft, and one count of contempt. Torres has denied the charges.

WIRE

From page 1

The theft reportedly happened early yesterday afternoon around 2pm. John Pangelinan, also known as "DJ Sun," was doing his routine afternoon show when he got word that local broadcasting had been interrupted.

"I thought it was going to be a chill day. ...And just as I was here, we got cut and I was like, 'What in the world?' and my boss came and was like, 'Oh, John, I'm just going to check out our systems if everything is OK."

After hearing nothing but static over the air, KWAW's Danilo Ganacias headed up to their radio transmitter site on Mt. Tapochau where he discovered the broken lock and cut wires.

It was learned the radio station immediately reported the matter to police, but there was no word from the Department of Public Safety yesterday about the incident.

As of yesterday afternoon, Magic 100.3 local radio was still not functioning, but online streaming is available. KWAW listeners can still tune in using the livestreaming link online through their browser: https://s3.radio.co/s8f738b862/listen or via the TuneIn App: http://tunein.com/radio/Magic-1003-s43718/

"We're working on fixing/replacing cable wires to get back on air as soon as possible," an email message from the station said.

Only two days before, the station had just resolved some transmission and static problems, Pangelinan said, and now this.

"It's kind of a shame, 'cause I feel bad for the crew too. They did all the hard work and, just like that, it's gone. ...And all of our listeners too…I feel bad for the listeners…because for the past week, they've been asking us, 'What's wrong with the signal?'"

"[On] Saipan there's a lot of cases like this, a lot of people are taking copper wire… for quick money and stuff," Pangelinan said. "But I just hope it doesn't happen anymore. …It's just sad to see, especially on this island…"

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2 overdue fishermen successfully rescued in FSM

SANTA RITA, Guam—U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam personnel successfully coordinated a search and rescue operation, in collaboration with multiple partners, to locate and rescue two overdue fishermen near Nukuoro Atoll in the Federated States of Micronesia last July 12 and 13.

Thanks to the combined efforts of air asset crews, commercial mariners, and local partners, the missing fishermen were found and brought to safety on July 13.

The U.S. Coast Guard was alerted at 1:20pm on July 12 by officials at the U.S. Embassy in Kolonia of a request from the Federated States of Micronesian government for assistance in locating two fishermen, aged 21 and 17, reported overdue on their fishing trip near Nukuoro Atoll. They were due back on July 10.

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam's Joint Rescue Sub-Center Guam immediately initiated search coordination efforts. They issued SafetyNet broadcast alerts to mariners in the area and used the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System to identify potential vessels of opportunity. They notified these vessel crews of the distress situation and requested assistance using Inmarsat C communications.

The search involved deploying a patrol boat from the Federated States of Micronesia and a diverted contract re-supply vessel, developing search patterns based on winds and currents to predict the potential location of the fishermen. Given the absence of organic U.S. Coast Guard aviation capability in Guam, watchstanders requested fixed-wing aircraft support from U.S. Coast Guard 14th District and Department of Defense partners. As a result, U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point crews scheduled an HC-130 Hercules airplane to depart Oahu, Hawaii, and arrive in the search area the following afternoon.

"Aircraft play a crucial role in our search and rescue operations at sea by getting crews on scene quickly and improving our coverage of large search areas," said Cmdr. Ryan Crose, the search and rescue mission coordinator for the case. "The collaboration between different agencies and the use of air assets is vital to success given the remote nature and tyranny of distance to overcome. This case is the second in four days where aircraft and multinational, interagency partnerships were essential to saving lives."

The U.S. Air Force 36th Wing at Andersen Air Force Base offered assistance by identifying four U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster aircraft departing Guam at various times. These aircraft crews were instrumental in the subsequent discovery of the boat in the water, approximately 10 nautical miles southwest of Nukuoro Atoll, on the morning of July 13.

During the search and rescue operation, the watchstanders at JRSC Guam conducted a second pull of the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System. As a result, they identified the 394-foot motor vessel *Sea Pearl I*, a cargo ship, was present in the area and established communication with them via phone. Later that afternoon, the watchstanders received notification from the M/V *Sea Pearl I* crew and their parent company representatives, informing them the cargo vessel crew successfully rescued the two fishermen from the water.

"By demonstrating a commitment to the safety of mariners in the region, the U.S. Coast Guard and our partners foster an environment of trust and cooperation, strengthening strategic regional partnerships and enhancing the overall security framework in the Indo-Pacific," said Capt. Nick Simmons, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam.

"Operating in the expansive Pacific region with limited resources poses unique challenges. Recognizing the immense value of commercial mariners in supporting search and rescue efforts, particularly in the vast expanse of the Pacific, we extend our appreciation to these merchant mariners who are willing to divert and rescue others at sea. They are a force multiplier," added Simmons.

On July 13, the JRSC Guam watchstanders received positive confirmation from the Department of Public Safety in the FSM that the two fishermen had indeed been found and were safe. Watchstanders notified U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point and Department of Defense partners who stood down additional aviation assets.

Nukuoro Atoll is one of 607 islands comprising FSM. The United States and the FSM have full diplomatic relations and maintain deep ties and a cooperative relationship. Nukuoro is remote, 832 nautical miles from Guam, and has no airstrip; a passenger boat calls irregularly, only once a month. The small population speaks their own unique language.

AMVER is the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System. Participating ships send a sail plan to the AMVER computer center before sailing. Vessels then report their locations every 48 hours until arriving at their port of call. Search and rescue controllers can predict the position of each ship at any point during its voyage and then call on them if there's a case in their area. ***(USCG)***

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ATTORNEY AT LAW
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 503758 CK, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 234-7859
Facsimile: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Defendant Lan Lan Wang

CHARITY HODSON (F0487)
ATTORNEY AT LAW
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya)
P.O. Box 502607, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 234-1615
Facsimile: (670) 234-5749

Co-Counsel for Defendant Lan Lan Wang

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

WON BAE SHON, Plaintiff, vs. HEE JONG CHOO, SOO WOAN JUN, YAN HUA LI, JING ZHU SUN, LAN LAN WANG, and DOES One to Five, Defendants.	CIVIL ACTION NO. 15-0018 SUMMONS

TO CROSSCLAIM DEFENDANT SOO WOAN JUN:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to DEFENDANT LAN LAN WANG'S COUNTERCLAIM AGAINST WON BAE SHON AND CROSSCLAIM AGAINST SOO WOAN JUN ("the Complaint"), a copy of which is given to you herewith, within Twenty-One (21) Days after service of this Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to **Robert Tenorio Torres, Attorney at Law, 5960 Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya), P.O. Box 500730**, Saipan, or soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Court of the above-entitled Court for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Office of the Clerk of Court, CNMI Superior Court, Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice, Susupe Village, P.O. Box 500307, Saipan MP 96950-0307. It may be prepared and signed for you by your Attorney and sent to the Clerk of Court by messenger or by mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to file an answer in accordance with this Summons, judgment by default pursuant to the court rules of the above-entitled Court may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

Dated this 14th day of March, 2023.

/s/
Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

Job Vacancy Announcement

Technical Operations Manager (Saipan, MP)

Job Duties
Oversee and supervise overall daily technical operations of the company; Develop and implement strategic plans for technical operation based on the company's customer base; Assess and analyze budgets and on-going technical projects to find ways to minimize expenses and optimize profits; Oversee and direct technical and mechanical issues from conception to completion; Oversee all onsite and offsite mechanical matters to monitor compliance with safety regulations; Set strategic plan for productivity and sales targets and ensure the company meets such targets

Requirements
Bachelor's Degree; Major(s) and/or field(s) of study in Mechanical Engineering.

Please send a resume and transcript to
BE TO CORPORATION, Attn: Da Young CHUNG at P.O. Box 7670 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950.

UNITED STATES
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 12, the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities hereby gives notice that it will hold its 2nd Quarter General Membership Meeting on July 31, 2023, from 9:00am to 11:30am at Saipan World Resort – Sunflower Room

AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Roll Call
III. Review & Adoption of the Agenda of July 31, 2023
IV. Review & Adoption of Meeting Minutes of May 12, 2023

V. Action Item
  a. Review and Approve the Proposed FY 2024 CDD Work Plan
  b. Review and Approve the Proposed FY 2025 CDD Work Plan

VI. Reports
  a. Chairman
  b. State Plan Committee Chairperson
  c. Fiscal Committee Chairperson
  d. Executive Director

VII. Old Business
  a. CLI Update
  b. No Tech DIY Activity

VIII. New Business
  a. AS UCEDD Technical Assistance
  b. CNMI Walkability Action Institute
  c. CNMI Disability Sport Festival
  d. September 2023 – Emergency Preparedness Month

IX. Miscellaneous
X. Next Meeting
XI. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 13(a) 7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting and require special accommodations are requested to call the Council 5 days in advance at 664-7000. The Public is welcome to submit written or 3 minutes of oral comments regarding the agenda above.

/s/ Concepcion Ulloa
Chairperson

This ad is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award total $274,744 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

SCC's Q2 networking mixer celebrates new office site

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce hosted its 2nd Quarter Networking Mixer last July 19, 2023, at its new office in Suite 201-A, on the second floor of the Marianas Business Plaza. Themed "Thriving Twenty-Three," the event commemorated the SCC's rich history and its achievements in recent years.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

2nd Place Winners — In It to Win It: Yasmin Miles and Sisi Alvarez

The evening brought together numerous SCC members for an engaging and fun-filled gathering. A major highlight of the event was the Chamber Trivia, where teams tested their knowledge with a series of challenging questions. The trivia featured SCC-related questions, attracting the participation of enthusiastic trivia teams.

The thrilling competition saw "The T Team" of Cristina and Edgar Tuazon securing third place, while the "In It to Win It Team" of Yasmin Miles and Sisi Alvarez claimed second place, and the "Best in the West" team of Eleanor Cabrera and Roberta Guerrero claimed first place. Heartfelt congratulations go out to all the winners, and the SCC extends its sincere appreciation for their continued support, eagerly looking forward to having them join future mixers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

3rd Place Winners — The T Team: Cristina Tuazon and Edgar Tuazon

The SCC would like to express its gratitude to everyone who attended the event, making it a grand success. In addition, the SCC acknowledges and extends heartfelt gratitude to our generous prize sponsors and event sponsors: Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan, MarPac Saipan, D&Q Distributors, 360 Restaurant, Century Insurance, and Naked Fish Bar and Grill. Their unwavering support made this event possible and contributed to its resounding triumph.

The SCC will be hosting its 3rd Quarter Mixer this Sept. 20, 2023, at Paradise Dental Spa. For more information on our upcoming mixer, contact us at (670) 234-7150 or send us an email inquiry at contactus@saipanchamber.org. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

1st Place Winners — Best in the West: Eleanor Cabrera and Roberta Guerrero

Tinian SBDC to host Small Business Night

The Tinian Small Business Development Center at the Northern Marianas College Tinian Center will be hosting "Tinian Small Business Night-Christmas in July" on Thursday, July 27, 2023 from 5pm to 8pm at the Tinian Fiesta Grounds. This is a locally powered shopping event featuring both seasoned and upcoming local entrepreneurs and their products and services.

This event kicks off the back-to-school season and gives a headstart on the much anticipated holiday shopping season. The community is invited for a night of food, entertainment, and fun.

The Tinian SBDC has put together an amazing line-up of entertainment, vendors, and information booths. Registered vendors include Tropics, Bing's Specialty, Tinian Treasure Chest, Sweetie's Korner, and Primos. Other information booths include NMC Tinian Center and Docomo Pacific. Additionally, the event will feature entertainment, a free raffle, and friendly competition amongst vendors.

To register as a vendor, aspiring and current small business owners must be registered as an official Tinian SBDC client: marianas.ecenterdirect.com. Interested vendors should contact Tinian SBDC director/business advisor Benjamin Huk Borja at benjamin.borja@marianas.edu or call (670) 237-6888 to confirm participation.

The CNMI SBDC Network promotes a business-friendly economic infrastructure in the community, builds entrepreneurial capacity and financial literacy within that community, and provides current and nascent small businesses with the technical assistance, counseling, training, and support they need to innovate, adapt, and grow.

The CNMI SBDC Network includes the CNMI SBDC lead center on Saipan, the Rota SBDC, and Tinian SBDC. It is partially funded by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Northern Marianas College. ***(NMC)***

Faith, Hope and
KARIDAT
Catholic Charities - Diocese of Chalan Kanoa

A Northern Mariana Islands Social Service

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(1) FULL-TIME SHELTER WORKER

Interested applicant can email info@karidat.org to receive a position description and a fillable application form.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED: A complete application form, copy of diploma/degree, resume/bio-data; current police clearance within 6 months and a copy of a valid CNMI Driver's license.

NO PHONE INQUIRIES PLEASE.
CLOSING DATE: FRIDAY, JULY 28, 2023 AT 4:00 PM.

PACIFIC BASIN INSURANCE, CO.
Office Address: Beach Road, Chalan Laulau, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 500710, Saipan, MP 96950 |
Email Address: pacificbasininsurance@gmail.com | Telephone Number: Tel. 1 (670) 234-5860

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

NAME OF EMPLOYER: Pacific Basin Insurance Company
THE POSITION: Senior Insurance Underwriter
NUMBER OF OPENINGS: 1

JOB DESCRIPTION: Examine documents to determine degree of risk from related factors, such as financial standing and value and condition of property; Decline excessive risk or if it does not conform with the guidelines or if exposures are extremely high, obtain further information, quote rates, or explain company underlying policies; Determines the appropriate premiums, amounts of coverage, and other policy terms and conditions; Evaluate possibility of losses due to catastrophes or excessive insurance from underwriting guidelines; Review company records to determine amount of insurance in force on single risk or group of closely related risks; Process the insurance policies and related invoices; Monitoring of portfolio.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

EDUCATION: Must have a Bachelor's Degree in Business, Economics, or Finance.
EXPERIENCE: Must have at least 24 months of relevant work experience as an Insurance Underwriter.
OTHER SPECIAL SKILLS OR REQUIREMENTS: Must be results-driven, dedicated, independent, and hardworking; Must be technically-equipped underwriter for liability and other casualty lines; and Must be knowledgeable in claims-handling and business development.
JOB SITE: Beach Road, Chalan Laulau, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HOW TO APPLY: If interested, please submit or mail application and comprehensive resume, with supporting credentials to:

JOSEPH C. REYES
President
PACIFIC BASIN INSURANCE COMPANY

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 23-091

Opening Date: Friday, July 14, 2023
Closing Date: Thursday, July 27, 2023

POSITION TITLE:	**Fiscal Technician: Customer Service Representative**
DEPARTMENT:	**COA/Customer Service/Call Center**
LOCATION:	**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$23,923.00 - $28,115.00 per annum, Non-Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**Four (4)**

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Chief of Administration or his/her designee.

Duties:

- May supervise staff to include: prioritizing and assigning work; conducting performance evaluations; ensuring staff is trained; ensuring that employees follow policies and procedures; maintaining a healthy and safe working environment; and, making hiring, termination, and disciplinary recommendations.
- Receives and processes customer payments; screens and verifies check receipts; updates customer accounts; reviews customer account status for partial payment receipts; computes payment information; and issues payment slips.
- May provide field utility meter inspection, testing, investigation, repairs and service documentation.
- Enters and verifies account changes and correction transactions; researches, reconciles and compiles adjustment documentation; prepares billing adjustments; and/or documents customer account status.
- Balances cash and other payment receipts and prepares bank deposits; balances credit card receipts with merchant settlement records; prepares sales deposits; processes customer refund payments; may process and file payroll documents.
- Receives and responds to customer calls and inquiries; reviews account and payment information; explains customer billing regarding charge disputes; assists customers with new accounts, required documentation and application processing; processes work orders as required; and refers inquiries to appropriate resource.
- Organizes and files revenue receipts, change vouchers, and related reports; maintains filing system; and prepares listings, schedules and activity reports.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:
Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS and four (4) years of utility accounts or fiscal support experience.

Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Supervisory principles, practices and techniques (based on assignment); Cash handling practices (based on assignment); Customer service principles; Basic mathematical principles; Recordkeeping principles; Safety principles and safe work practices; Applicable equipment used in field utility services (based on assignment); Modern office technology.

Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Supervising, monitoring, training and evaluating staff (based on assignment); Receiving, posting and reconciling payments, cash receipts or account information; Verifying and updating account or utility meter information; Providing customer service and responding to inquiries; Coordinating services with other departments or resources; Inspecting and operating field equipment related to utility usage and testing (based on assignment); Performing basic mathematical calculations; Researching, reconciling and preparing account adjustments and related documentation; Preparing and maintaining files, forms, reports and records; Copying and scanning documents; Updating, maintaining and preparing reports and spreadsheet tracking documents; Researching account information and providing information regarding billing disputes; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing: Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org.

P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Fax: (670) 235-5131
CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 23-090

Opening Date: Friday, July 14, 2023
Closing Date: Thursday, July 27, 2023

POSITION TITLE:	**Fiscal Assistant/Dispatch Operator**
DEPARTMENT:	**COA/Customer Service/Call Center**
LOCATION:	**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**
ANNUAL SALARY:	**$19,231.00 to $22,659.00 per annum, Non-Exempt**
CONTRACT:	**Not Contracted**
POSITION(S):	**Three (3)**

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Chief of Administration or his/her designee.

Duties:

- Monitors radio communications in order to dispatch crews for troubleshooting and for related service calls.
- Receives incoming calls reporting complaints or issues related to water, sewer or power utilities; provides general customer service; and routes service calls to appropriate resource.
- Organizes and maintains file systems and pertinent records.
- Performs data entry; maintains and updates logs and dispatch related documentation.
- Prepares and maintains requisitions.
- Follows up with customers to provide basic information, status updates, and to verify customer's experience and any remaining service needs.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS and up to one (1) year of customer service experience.

Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic recordkeeping principles; Radio communications equipment procedures; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Providing customer service; Monitoring and utilizing radio communications and equipment; Receiving and routing service or problem calls; Entering, updating and maintaining data; Organizing and maintaining filing systems and records; Preparing and updating logs, records and related documentation; Performing follow up calls to ensure adequate service provision; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org.

P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Fax: (670) 235-5131
CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

PUTI'ON TWIN HULL
NOTICE OF AUCTION/BIDDING
MINIMUM BID: $20,000.00

Year: 1984; Official No. 677731; Call Sign: WCZ5662; Service: Passenger
Hull Material: Wood; Horsepower: 530; Propulsion: Diesel
Gross Tonnage: 99 GRT; Net Tonnage: 85 NRT; Length: 83.6; Breadth: 30.0; Depth: 11.0

For more information

Pursuant to the Stipulated Judgment in Commonwealth Ports Authority v. Saipan Sea Ventures, Inc., Civ. No. 18-0498, notice is given of the auction of the vessel owned by Saipan Sea Ventures, Inc., to be sold at auction by the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Risk of loss remains with Saipan Sea Ventures, Inc. until the winning bidder's bid is approved by the Commonwealth Superior Court after which time the winning bidder shall assume ownership and responsibility for the vessel. By submitting a bid and if accepted, the winning bidder agrees to accept full risk and responsibility of the vessel once approved by the Commonwealth Superior Court, including compliance with CNMI and Federal/USCG laws and regulations.

Please contact Commonwealth Ports Authority counsel, Robert T. Torres at (670) 234-7859/234-5750, Email: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com. **Minimum bid for the Puti'on Twin Hull is $20,000.00.** Any bid(s) less than the minimum bid will be rejected. Bid submissions will be closed at 4:30 pm on **July 27, 2023.** Bid(s) opening shall be at 4:30 p.m. on **July 28, 2023.** The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any and all offer(s). A "Puti'on Twin Hull" bid form can be obtained from the Commonwealth Ports Authority, through its Counsel at Robert T. Torres Law Office, Chalan Kiya P.O. Box 500730 CK Saipan, MP 96950.

Bid Instructions

1. This is a private auction/bidding on behalf of the Commonwealth Ports Authority. The bidding is conducted through the Law Office of Robert T. Torres using a written/sealed bid process. However, the Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any and all offers including any offer not determined to be commercially reasonable. Bids may be sealed and submitted to the Law Office of Robert T. Torres in Chalan Kiya, Saipan with a copy valid Identification Card or Passport.
2. The Puti'on Twin Hull is offered for bid and sale **"As Is"** and without any warranty or guarantee as to fitness for use and each bidder is on notice to research this specialized and particular unit as a twin hull motor craft and the conditions in which it may be used in the CNMI or in other locations.
3. If a bid is accepted, the winning bidder shall tender the full amount upon notice and shall be responsible for the removal of the vessel within three (3) working days of court approval. Otherwise, the next highest bidder shall be considered.
4. A winning bid shall be paid by Cash or Cashier's Check within three (3) working days of notice to the winning bidder. Personal checks/company checks are not accepted. The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel the bid and resell/re-auction the unit.
5. Inspection: Any person wishing to inspect the Puti'on Twin Hull may contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres to request an inspection at least two (2) days prior to inspection.
6. **ALL BIDS ARE FINAL.**

GCC breaks ground on culinary arts and baking center

Guam Community College broke ground on Wednesday, July 19, for renovations and upgrades to its existing Culinary Arts Kitchen/Classroom and Multipurpose Auditorium. Upon its completion in 2024, student chefs will be able to cook savory dishes and whip up sweet treats in the combined state-of-the-art Culinary Arts and Baking Center.

"Today, the start of this renovation will help the college build upon its already award-winning culinary program and expand to baking as well," said GCC president Dr. Mary A. Y. Okada. "I know many of you have had the opportunity to partake in their delicious meals and pastries."

Along with the expanded space, the renovation will also elevate hygiene by using the best and most effective materials for countertops to help mitigate the risk of COVID-19. A new mechanical system will use Upper-Room Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation and non-ozone bi-polar ionization technology further reducing exposure to the COVID-19 virus and other airborne illnesses.

The renovation will cost $2,716,950.36 and is funded by the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund and the Governor's Education Stabilization Funds.

Student Center canopy

Okada shared that there will be a ribbon-cutting in the next month to open up the Student Center Canopy. The project broke ground in September 2022 and provides students with a 4,300-square-foot concrete canopy. Students will be able to use the large covered outdoor space to meet, eat a meal, or just take a break between classes. An announcement will be made at a later date on this ribbon cutting. ***(GCC)***

GCC

Guam Community College broke ground for the renovations and upgrades to its existing Culinary Arts Kitchen/Classroom and Multipurpose Auditorium last July 19.

Call for nomination for Bridge of Light Award

The Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence announced yesterday that nominations are now open for the prestigious 2023 Bridge of Light Award. This annual award serves as a heartfelt gesture of gratitude and recognition of individuals who have dedicated themselves to assisting victims, survivors, and the community in their unwavering commitment to end domestic and sexual violence in the CNMI.

The Bridge of Light Award, presented by NMCADSV, honors one exceptional individual in the CNMI who has displayed extraordinary dedication in ensuring community safety, actively addressing domestic violence and sexual assault, and acting as a "Bridge of Light" and support for victims and survivors. This award serves as a testament to the remarkable efforts and achievements of the chosen recipient.

Eligible candidates for the 2023 Bridge of Light Award include individuals actively contributing as service providers, first responders, representatives, or volunteers within one or more eligible agencies, organizations, or offices in the CNMI. Nominees must have a minimum employment or volunteer duration of one year and/or demonstrate one or more significant accomplishments that contribute to sustaining the movement. Additionally, nominees should exhibit unwavering commitment and effort in areas such as leadership, service, advocacy for victims, prevention, community education or mobilization, and resource development.

Nominations can be submitted by victims or survivors, family members or friends of victims or survivors, as well as members, representatives, and employees, representatives, and volunteers from eligible CNMI agencies, organizations, or offices.

To nominate a deserving individual, visit the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=h4NzUJCa9sFus236pnlEEA_3D_3D. The deadline to complete the nomination form is Friday, Sept. 8, 2023, at 11:59pm.

During the evaluation process, nominations will be thoroughly reviewed based on the information provided in the form. It is strongly encouraged that nominators provide specific and comprehensive details to effectively demonstrate why their nominee deserves this prestigious award.

The recipient of the 2023 Bridge of Light Award will be announced during the Domestic Violence Awareness Month proclamation signing ceremony in October. Furthermore, the awardee will be granted an exclusive opportunity to participate in a national training program provided by NMCADSV, in addition to receiving self-care prizes sponsored by Tan Siu Lin Foundation and Bridge Capital, LLC.

For further information about the 2023 Bridge of Light Award or to inquire about the nomination process, contact NMCADSV at (670) 234-3878 or via email at info@endviolencenmi.org. ***(PR)***

CHCC wraps 3 days of Walkability Institute workshops

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan participants of the Walkability Action Institute workshop have their picture taken.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rota participants of the Walkability Action Institute workshop pose for a group picture.

A three-day Walkability Action Institute workshop on Saipan, Tinian and Rota from July 10 to 12 saw CNMI community members and organizations work together on the beginning phase of creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment in the CNMI.

According to a Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. news release, the Walkability Action Institute is the beginning phase to developing and/or enhancing action plans to advance active transportation and active routes to everyday destinations in the CNMI.

The overarching goal is to improve the Built Environment in the CNMI so that future generations are born and can live, play, work, learn and pray in a community that supports optimal health and wellbeing.

Workshop participants included CHCC's Public Health Services Non-Communicable Disease Programs, Brabu Behavioral Health Services, Office of Planning and Development, and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors.

The purpose of these workshops was to strengthen partnerships across various CNMI community members and organizations in the interest of creating a safer, and supportive environment for individuals of all modalities.

"These workshops allowed us to hear from and explore the different communities on each island. Participants took part in fruitful discussions regarding safe routes, moveability, and safe streets data for the CNMI. In addition, a walk audit was completed on each island to allow participants the opportunity to better visualize the action plans needed to achieve our moveability goals We were blown away by the level of participation and passion that we saw from all agencies and individuals at all three workshops. This is just the start, and we can't wait to continue our efforts," states the CHCC news release. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tinian participants of the Walkability Action Institute workshop pose for a group picture.

Chugach Consolidation Solutions, LLC

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Chugach Consolidation Solutions, LLC (the "**Company**"), a foreign company, is applying for a Certificate of Withdrawal from the CNMI Registrar of Corporations.

Therefore, the Company surrenders the authority to transact business in the CNMI and revokes the authority of its registered agent, to accept services on its behalf and appoints the Registrar of Corporations of the CNMI as its agent for service of process in any proceeding based on a cause of action arising during the time it was authorized to transact business in the CNMI.

Job Vacancy Announcement

Graphic Designer (Saipan, MP)

Job Duties

- Provide drafting and design services by preparing and maintaining graphic drawings that compile to create a set of architectural plans;
- Prepare graphic designs from general instruction and preliminary sketches, diagrams, or schematics;
- Prepare drawings from conceptual plan to Development Plan and construction record drawings;
- Make sure of CAD to prepare engineering drawings consisting of plans, sections, and details from rough sketches to established standards and procedures;
- Ensure compliance with required design safety factors, tolerances, and specifications.

Requirements

- Associate's Degree or Equivalent; Major(s) and/or field(s) of study in Architecture/Architectural Studies/Eco-Friendly Architecture.
- At least 24 months of work experience as a graphic designer is required;

Please send a resume and transcript to
BE TO CORPORATION, Attn: Da Young CHUNG at
P.O. Box 7670 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL LICENSING
P.O. Box 502078, Bldg., 11925 Pohnpei Court
Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel No: (670) 664-4809 Fax: (670) 664-4814
Email: info@cnmilicensing.gov.mp
Website: www.cnmilicensing.gov.mp

Pursuant to P. L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Governor David M. Apatang, through the Board of Professional Licensing (BPL) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its quarterly board meeting on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room, on Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA

- **I.** Meeting Call to Order
- **II.** Determination of Quorum
- **III.** Review and Adoption of Agenda
- **IV.** Review and Adoption of Minutes (03/09/2023)
- **V.** Public Comments
- **VI.** Chairperson's Report
  - **A.** Welcoming of Member Board, Denn M. Manglona
  - **B.** Upcoming NCEES Annual Business Meeting
- **VII.** Director's Report
  - **A.** Financial Report
- **VIII.** Investigator's Report
- **IX.** Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
  - **A.** Governor's Office
  - **B.** Legislature
- **X.** Old Business
  - **A.** Notice of Certification for Adoption on Proposed Regulation for Real Estate Appraisal
- **XI.** New Business
- **XII.** Pending Applications for Board's Review
  - **A.** New Application
  - **B.** Renewal Applications
- **XIII.** Miscellaneous Business
- **XIV.** Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
- **XV.** Announcements
  - **A.** Next Meeting Date
  - **B.** Adjournment of Meeting

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP NO: CPA-RFP-011-23-REPACKAGED
SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 28, 2023 TIME: 2:00 P.M.

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT INTERIOR PLANTS RENTAL, SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE

THE PROPOSAL PACKAGE MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA), 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, SAIPAN, MP 96950, DURING WORKING WORKS BEGINNING JUNE 28, 2023.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PROJECT MUST BE IN WRITING AND ADDRESS TO THE PROCUREMENT OFFICER, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY EITHER BY FACSIMILE AT 234-5962 OR EMAIL: atudela@cnmiports.com NO LATER THAN 4:00 P.M., JULY 20, 2023.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL PROPOSALS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A PROPOSAL IF IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CPA. ALL PROPOSALS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CPA.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: _____

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950-1055
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-Mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cnmiports.com

AMENDED
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 04-2023

Opening date: July 03, 2023 **Closing date: July 21, 2023**

Location: SAIPAN		**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) Airport Manager	UNGRADED
	(1) ARFF Mechanic II	PL 6/1 to 6/12 ($9.27/hr to $15.85/hr)
	(1) Grants Specialist	PL 15/1 to 15/12 ($14.38/hr to $24.60/hr)
	(1) Master Electrician	PL 19/1 to 19/12 ($17.48/hr to $29.90/hr)
	(1) Procurement Clerk	PL 2/1 to 2/12 ($7.63/hr to $13.04/hr)
Location: TINIAN		**SALARY**
Position(s):	(2) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee	PL 5/1 to 5/12 ($8.83/hr)
Location: ROTA		**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) Custodial/Maintenance-I	PL 2/1 to 2/12 ($7.63/hr to $13.04/hr)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office, Tinian International Airport, or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than ***5:00 P.M. on Friday, July 21, 2023.***

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin, Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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EDITORIAL

Lesson learned on student loans: Biden goes for a smaller forgiveness program this time

While President Joe Biden's new student loan relief program for 804,000 borrowers won't assist anywhere near the 26 million Americans he had been aiming for with his previous plan, this one is seemingly fully legal and won't be knocked down by the Supreme Court. And instead of eliminating more than $400 billion in student debt, only a tenth of that, $39 billion, will be wiped out. But for those 804,000, the help is welcome.

This is not a handout or letting people off the hook. In each case, the borrower is only eligible for forgiveness after making the required 240 or 300 monthly payments. That's 20 or 25 years of paying back loans, as originally agreed to when the money was taken out for education expenses decades ago. But too often there were errors in tabulating that the borrowers had actually made the 240 or 300 payments and were qualified to have their loans dismissed. That is now being fixed

Biden and his Education Department have also attacked loans for other specific groups, like 653,800 public employees, who received $45 billion in relief. Another 491,000 borrowers with a total and permanent disability were relieved of $10.5 billion in debts and the largest group of borrowers, 1.3 million, had $22 billion removed from the books because their schools cheated them or suddenly shut down.

Amid this relief, recall that student loans repayments for everyone have been frozen for more than three years, since March 2020, when COVID showed up. That moratorium ends in October and interest, which has also been frozen all this time as well, resumes in September.

Having a 43-month reprieve from paying off loans has been a great benefit for everyone, including millions who easily could have handled the payments. That in itself has been a level of relief.

When the court shot down Biden's larger plan, he pledged to keep working on ways to ease the debt burden. As long as he's following the law and targeting the assistance to those who need it most, we say, "Keep going, Joe."

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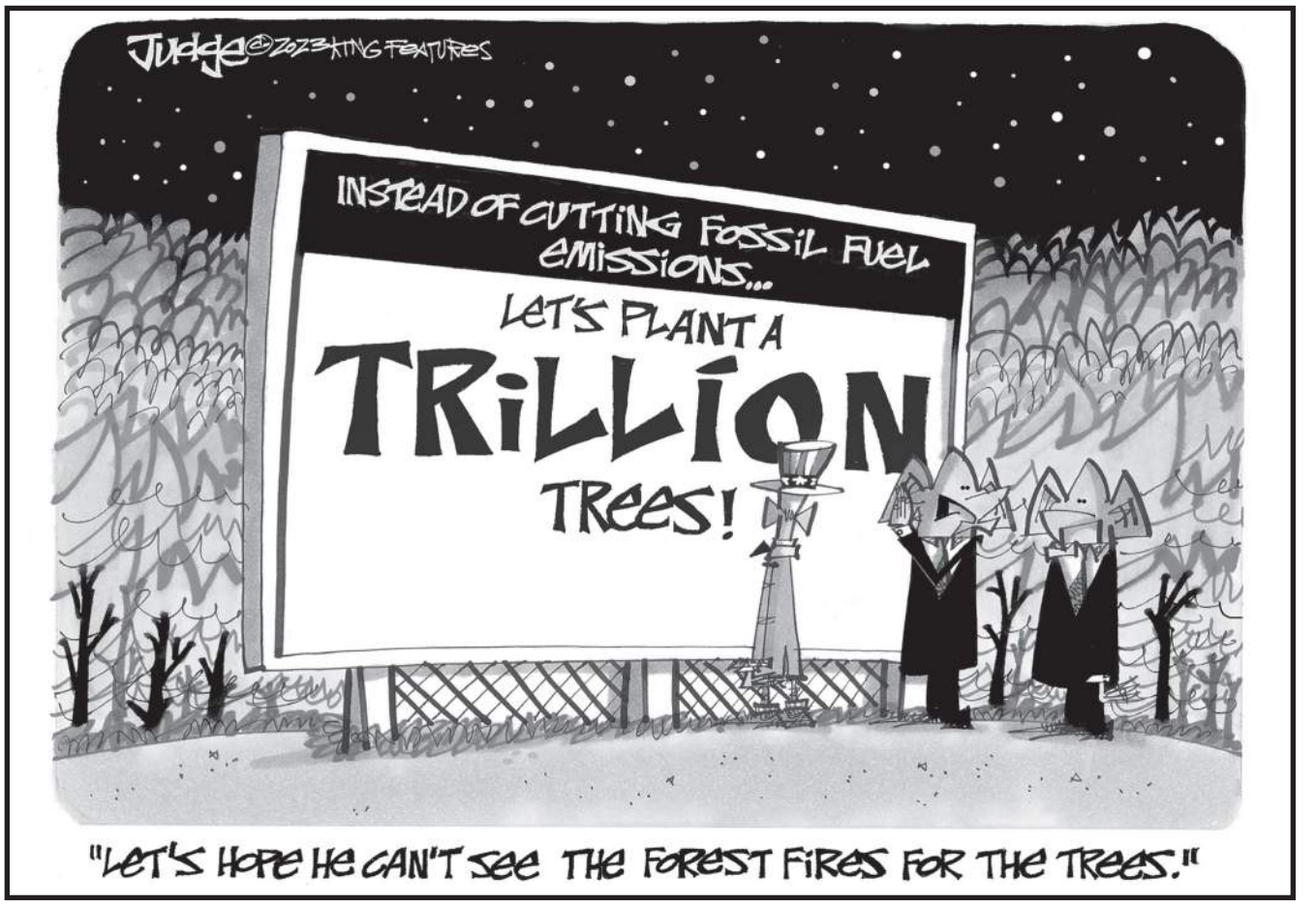
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INSTEAD OF CUTTING FOSSIL FUEL EMISSIONS...
LET'S PLANT A
TRILLION
TREES!
"LET'S HOPE HE CAN'T SEE THE FOREST FIRES FOR THE TREES."

Here's what's so frightening about the Supreme Court's latest power trip

By JACKIE CALMES
Los Angeles Times

Jackie Calmes is an opinion columnist for the Los Angeles Times *in Washington, D.C.*

A 6-3 conservative supermajority has really put the "supreme" in "Supreme Court," and not in a good way.

The court's major rulings in the term that just ended continued to defy precedents and expand its power versus the president and Congress. All the while, reports of justices' ethical transgressions mounted, and Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. gave the back of his hand to calls for reform, claiming against all evidence that the justices can police themselves.

The worrisome result for our democracy is a court with more power and less legitimacy. The public's opinion of the justices remains at an all-time low, with less than a third of American voters having positive views of the Supreme Court, according to a recent NBC News poll.

The justices have dashed off for their summer breaks with their families or perhaps their favorite right-wing billionaires—who knows which given Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito's failures to disclose such junkets?—but the court will remain in the headlines. Next Thursday, the Democratic-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee plans to vote on Supreme Court reforms that have gained support with the justices' inadvertent help. The legislation would require the court to spell out a code of conduct, create a lower court to review ethics complaints against the justices and tighten federal laws governing their financial disclosures and recusals from cases presenting conflicts of interest.

The bill would not heed progressives' calls to expand the court to dilute conservatives' sway—a bad idea that would only further politicize the institution (as President Joe Biden argues). Nor does the bill include term limits for justices—a much better idea, especially given Republican presidents' practice of choosing relatively young nominees who can stay on the bench for decades, though it could require amending the Constitution.

"Since the Court won't act, Congress will," Sens. Richard Durbin of Illinois, the Judiciary Committee chair, and Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island said in a joint statement.

Tough talk, but the measure won't become law. Republicans will see to that by either filibuster in the Senate or burial in the GOP-controlled House.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky slammed Democrats for "trying to tell a coequal branch of government how to manage its internal operations, ostensibly to clean up its 'ethics.'" He didn't mention the scandals. He also defended the court's recent decisions, which of course he would: Its rulings, especially those against federal clean air and water regulations, are just what the coal state senator had in mind when he abused the Senate's confirmation power to create the conservative supermajority.

Despite the political gridlock, this debate will keep the question of the court's ethics and jurisprudence alive. And that's a good thing.

"This is not a normal court," Biden said recently. It has, he added later, "done more to unravel basic rights and basic decisions than any court in recent history."

Fact check: True.

Following last year's landmark rulings overturning precedents on abortion, gun rights and separation of church and state, the conservatives' latest decisions further undermined federal agencies' power, gutting wetland protections and reversing college debt relief for millions of Americans. Ominously, by taking cases on Biden's college debt program and a web designer's bid to refuse service to same-sex couples, the court threw open its doors to other plaintiffs of dubious legal standing who happen to share the conservatives' agenda.

After decades of decrying judicial activism, Republicans are celebrating a Supreme Court that has taken activism to a whole new level. And what makes the court's power grabs and lack of ethical accountability all the more objectionable is that the justices, unlike the major players in our other branches of government, are unelected and life-tenured. Their decisions can't be appealed, legally or politically.

As Justice Elena Kagan wrote in the liberals' dissent from Roberts' college debt opinion: "At the behest of a party that has suffered no injury, the majority decides a contested public policy issue properly belonging to the politically accountable branches and the people they represent." She called that "a danger to a democratic order."

To which the prickly Roberts harrumphed: "It has become a disturbing feature of some recent opinions to criticize the decisions with which they disagree as going beyond the proper role of the judiciary."

The most arrogant act of the term, however, wasn't a ruling; it was Roberts' dismissive rejection of Durbin's invitation to testify about court ethics and reforms. No separation-of-powers concern or precedent prevented Roberts from coming down from his bench to provide some much-needed transparency, humility and responsiveness to a troubled public.

But Roberts instead sent a predictably dismissive reply: "I must respectfully decline your invitation."

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Paving the path from prison to college

By AMY LOYD and AMY L. SOLOMON
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUN

Editor's Note: Highlighting the expansion of Pell Grants for incarcerated individuals that began its implementation July 1, the U.S. Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education Dr. Amy Loyd and the U.S. Department of Justice's Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs Amy Solomon co-authored a commentary published yesterday in Newsweek. The full text of the guest column follows:

This month marks the beginning of a new era in education for hundreds of thousands of Americans. After almost three decades of being locked out of federal student aid eligibility, people in our nation's prisons and other correctional facilities will now have access to financial assistance through the Pell Grant program. Education can—and does—have a transformative effect, both in prison and after release. It helps people succeed and thrive during reentry, reduces poverty, strengthens public safety—all while saving taxpayer dollars.

Since they were first awarded 50 years ago, Pell Grants have been a lifeline for countless students seeking a postsecondary degree, many of whom would not have otherwise been able to afford the cost of college. Prior to 1994, when Congress banned Pell for individuals who are incarcerated, people in federal and state penal institutions—disproportionately people of color and with low incomes were among the many who benefited from Pell Grants. Pell widened the doorway to a college education, paving the way to gainful employment and a new life for the 95 percent of people in prison who will return home.

During the Obama-Biden administration, the Department of Education, the Department of Justice, and more than 20 other federal agencies came together through the Federal Interagency Reentry Council and worked with reentry advocates and formerly incarcerated people to devise the Second Chance Pell Experiment. Second Chance Pell enlisted institutions of higher learning to partner with federal and state correctional systems to provide Pell assistance on a pilot basis. Over time, and in partnership with leading non-governmental organizations like the Vera Institute of Justice, 200 colleges and universities in 48 states, including two-dozen Historically Black Colleges and Universities, joined the initiative, and more than 9,000 students earned postsecondary credentials with the support of Pell Grants.

The success of Second Chance Pell contributed to the expansion of Pell eligibility under the FAFSA Simplification Act, a notable bipartisan achievement that restored Pell eligibility for students in correctional facilities across the country beginning in the 2023-24 academic year. The law recognizes the clear benefits that a higher education confers to students and society alike. Studies have found that a postsecondary education helps justice-impacted people who were formerly incarcerated find jobs upon release, support their families, and contribute positively to their communities. Research also shows that access to education in prison lowers the odds of recidivating by 43 percent and saves taxpayers up to $5 for every $1 spent.

Just as important, it enables people like Angel Sanchez to realize their potential.

Sentenced to prison at just 16 years old, Angel earned his GED while imprisoned in the Florida Department of Corrections. While the Pell ban was in effect during his time in prison, he received a Pell Grant after his release and went on to obtain his undergraduate and law degrees. He is now a licensed attorney and serves as a visiting fellow with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, part of the Justice Department's Office of Justice Programs, where he works with colleagues at the Department of Education to improve the post-release prospects of people in the corrections system. Stories like Angel's highlight the transformative power of education for justice-involved people.

Inspiring examples like Angel's abound. The time is now to build on his example and provide students who are incarcerated across the country access to the resources and support they need to earn a college degree, which is associated with many benefits including higher earnings, reduced risk of unemployment, and vastly lower recidivism rates.

To bring this success to scale, we need buy-in from our country's prison administrators and the active support of our nation's higher learning institutions. Colleges and universities can show their commitment to the wider diffusion of knowledge and the transformative power of education by partnering with corrections systems to establish prison education programs. Last fall, the Department of Education released new regulations for the application and approval process for prison education programs. Creation of these programs in cooperation with state departments of corrections and the Federal Bureau of Prisons is a first step in enabling incarcerated students to access Pell Grants and begin their journey through postsecondary education. Research shows that prisons with high-quality education programs have fewer violent incidents than those without these opportunities, making it safer for both people in custody and correctional officers.

For their part, prisons can show their commitment to public safety, rehabilitation, and reentry by partnering with colleges and universities to make Pell-eligible programs accessible to all college-ready people in their custody. In addition, prisons can help individuals become college-ready by providing other education programs, such as adult literacy and GED programs. Corrections-education partnerships should expand access to postsecondary opportunities, both by creating opportunities for students inside the walls and by bridging those opportunities into the community at large. They can benefit from innovative collaborations like the one instituted by the Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison, which expands the availability of credit-bearing classes inside prisons and provides support to students pursuing higher education after their release.

The reinstatement of federal Pell Grants is a game-changer, not just for people who are incarcerated, but for their families, our communities, our economy, and our country as a whole. We call upon our nation's colleges and universities, and departments of corrections and correctional facilities across our country to join us as we open this opportunity to the many students who are incarcerated and stand to fulfill their potential and contribute to their communities in extraordinary ways.

Dr. Amy Loyd is assistant secretary for the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education. Amy L. Solomon is assistant attorney general for the Office of Justice Programs in the U.S. Department of Justice.

Northwestern sports enable a toxic culture of sexual violence

By HAYDEN RICHARDSON
Chicago Tribune

Hayden Richardson is a political operative in Washington. She graduated from Northwestern University in 2021.

When I read about the allegations of rampant sexual violence in the Northwestern University football program, I was horrified. But sadly, I wasn't surprised. As a cheerleader, I, too, was a victim of sexual abuse and harassment at Northwestern University, and school officials did nothing to stop it.

From 2018 to 2019, I was groped by drunken fans and alumni in public at football games. At university donor events, older men touched me inappropriately, picked me up without my consent and made sexual remarks about my appearance. And when I complained about the harassment to my head coach—who required me to "mingle" with donors for the school's financial benefit—she did absolutely nothing.

So, while I was saddened to read about my alma mater's football team, I was not shocked in the least that these activities allegedly were permitted. The abuse of Northwestern football and cheerleading teams didn't happen in isolation. There shouldn't be anyone asking, "How could this happen?" Of course, it happened. The choices that created this toxic culture of sexual abuse occurred thousands of times over decades. And it is conditioned to continue repeating itself until the risk is so significant, it has to end.

The culture of Northwestern is made up of the fans who sexually violated me and my teammates. It is made up of the administrators who told us it was expected we take it. My coach sent me into bars for donor events, even though I couldn't legally get in as Hayden Richardson. These choices were condoned and sanctioned by the community and the culture it creates. This culture of sexual exploitation bleeds into everything. It exploited me, my teammates and, sadly, Northwestern football.

The culture at Northwestern normalized sexual violence to the point that the football team gave it a nickname—"running"—and organized events to celebrate the abuse, such as "Runsgiving" and "Runsmas."

After several alleged acts of violence, there were thousands of decisions to do nothing. To stay silent. To shame their teammates into submission. To call their teammates liars and betray their friends. What a horrific series of choices—choices to organize violence, sanction violence and do nothing.

It is impossible to believe that in the case of Northwestern football, from 2006 to 2023, their leader "knew nothing." These men worshipped head coach Pat Fitzgerald. I am shocked that 250-pound men could be so quiet during these activities that he never heard a peep.

Yet, it is the culture of Northwestern that allows leadership to turn a blind eye to systematic sexual violence and abuse. Members of leadership claim they "did not know" about my abuse, even though my team told them. And of course, now they are claiming they "did not know" about what was going on in Northwestern football.

Northwestern, a billion-dollar institution, is accountable for the actions of its people and the systematic practices within it. The institution can't "feel bad" or "be sorry" because it isn't real. But the university can be held accountable to ensure the future doesn't look the same.

That is why I filed a lawsuit in federal court, with the help of prominent Title IX attorney Andrew Miltenberg. The leadership and those who continue to exploit college women and men need to be held accountable for their actions and indifference, so it doesn't continue to happen. Someone needs to stop Northwestern's toxic culture of normalizing sexual abuse, and that's why I'm speaking out and pursuing justice.

Organizing and journalism lead to the pursuit of truth, and they should lead to more work. Don't stop just because a coach was fired. The "purgers" are not accountable, still hiding behind the Northwestern image or that of the NFL team they're on the practice squad for.

Finally, Northwestern is also made up of you and me, people who care and take action to stop this from happening to others. Discover, uncover and break down the system. Use the process of elimination to understand the team dynamic better. They deserve that.

Burying the truth does nothing; it will come out sometime. My inbox is always open if I can be helpful. You are not alone.

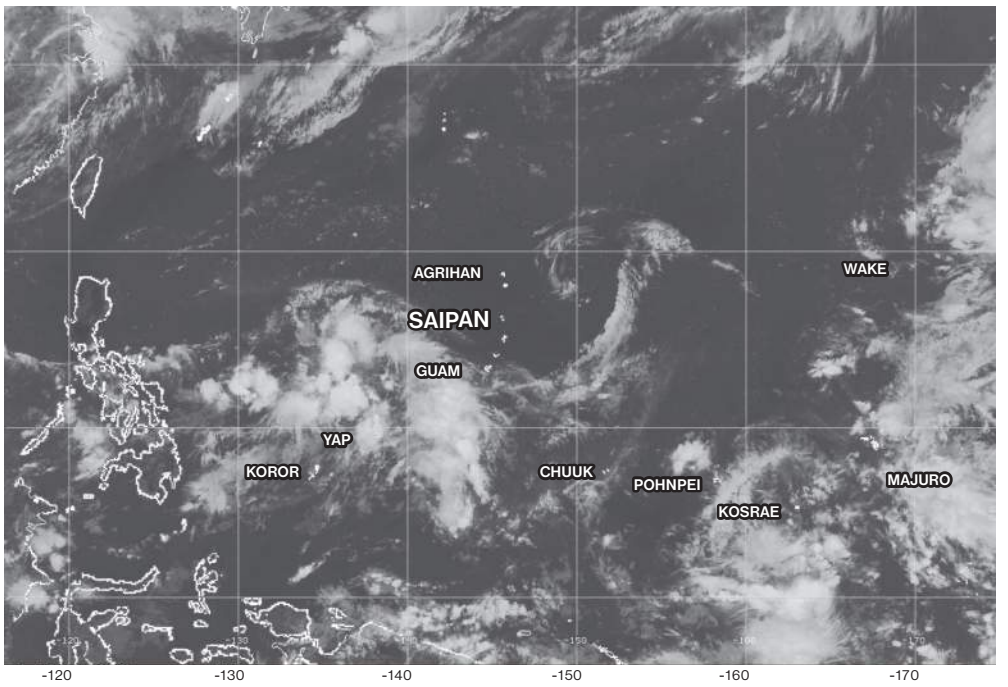
If you or a loved one has experienced sexual assault, help is available. Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-4673 or visit hotline.rainn.org/ to be connected with resources.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Scattered showers and thunderstorms. Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	A 40 percent chance of showers. Mostly cloudy	A chance of showers. Partly sunny	A chance of showers. Partly sunny
86° 80°	86° 79°	84° 80°	84° 80°	84° 80°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:15 AM, THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate trades prevail in the Marianas. Satellite imagery and Doppler radar indicate some dissipating cells southeast of Guam waters. Ipan buoy shows seas are about 3 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	88° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Scattered Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Pohnpei	Scattered Thunderstorms	87° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°
Majuro	Scattered Thunderstorms	87° / 81°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	57° / 48°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	90° / 73°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	90° / 84°
Honolulu	Windy	88° / 77°
London	Showers	70° / 63°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	75° / 62°
Manila	Thunderstorms	90° / 79°
Melbourne	Windy	61° / 48°
Miami	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°
New York	Partly Cloudy	92° / 80°
Osaka	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	82° / 66°
Busan	Rain	79° / 75°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	90° / 66°
Salem	Thunderstorms	92° / 73°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	65° / 55°
Seoul	Showers	90° / 75°
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	81° / 73°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	98° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:56 AM	6:50 PM
Saturday	5:56 AM	6:50 PM
Sunday	5:56 AM	6:50 PM
Monday	5:57 AM	6:49 PM
Tuesday	5:57 AM	6:49 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:32 AM	9:21 PM	-
Saturday	9:19 AM	9:55 PM	-
Sunday	10:05 AM	10:28 PM	-
Monday	10:51 AM	11:02 PM	-
Tuesday	11:38 AM	11:37 PM	-

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
4:09 AM	Low Tide	1.34
8:47 AM	High Tide	1.89
4:07 PM	Low Tide	0.15
11:07 PM	High Tide	1.93

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 19, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily
UA156	7:10PM	7:55PM	1, 4

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

7C3467	3:00AM	7:10AM	Daily up to July 20
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
TW9308	4:45AM	8:45AM	1, 5 July 17 to Aug 18
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7 from July 21

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA112	5:15PM	6:05PM	1, 4

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3468	8:20PM	1:50AM+1	Daily up to July 19
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
TW9307	10:00PM	3:45AM+1	6, 4 July 23 to Aug 20
7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7 from July 20

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

DYS Summer Camp kids pay a visit to Saipan Mayor's Office

»Campers learn about heavy equipment operations

Children participating in the Division of Youth Services' summer camp recently paid a visit to the Saipan Mayor's Office where they were treated to a presentation and demonstration of the Saipan Mayor's Office's heavy equipment vehicles such as the front loader and boom truck.

The campers got to witness the capabilities of the vehicles, much to their amazement and even got to sit inside.

Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Camacho also met with the campers and talked about the importance of safety in the community. Afterwards the children were given the opportunity to win some prizes after answering some tricky riddles.

Camacho appreciated the opportunity to educate the youth on the duties and responsibilities of the Saipan Mayor's Office and to instill in them a sense of responsibility and pride for their community. "Our youth should take pride in their island community and learn about how the hardworking crews of the mayor's office are keeping their community clean and safe," Camacho said. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Children participating in the Division of Youth Services' summer camp visit the Saipan Mayor's Office and were treated to a presentation and demonstration of the Saipan Mayor's Office's heavy equipment vehicles.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Mayor Ramon "RB" Camacho meets with the children participating in the Division of Youth Services' summer camp.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Children participating in the Division of Youth Services' summer camp are treated to a demonstration of a front loader at the Saipan Mayor's Office.

4-H Camp Maga'lahi empowers Saipan youth with cultural education, outdoor adventures

A transformative experience awaited 180 young individuals from Saipan as they gathered for 4-H Marianas's Camp Maga'lahi. Spanning from June 12 to June 24, the collaboration between the Northern Marianas College's Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services Family, Community, and Youth Development program and 4-H Marianas aimed to immerse participants in indigenous culture, marine environments, and healthy eating practices.

During the initial session tailored for 5 to 7-year-olds, approximately 60 campers embarked on visits to the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture, American Memorial Park, and the Kagman Community Center.

The second session, which had 120 campers aged 8 to 12 years old, participated in visits to the Managaha, American Memorial Park, and interacted with various agencies such as the Commonwealth Ports Authority – Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting, Star Marianas Air, Northern Marianas Technical Institute, Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, Division of Coastal Resources Management, NMC-CREES' Nutrition and Health Program, and the Northern Marianas Sports Association.

Impressed by the program, one parent shared the positive impact it had on their child, noting increased confidence and willingness to participate in different activities. "He is now willing to join different things. ...He's more willing to participate in the camp again because he knows he's going to make friends and he's going to have a good time," said the parent.

Campers and camp counselors alike benefited from the camp's wide range of activities, which fostered the development of leadership skills and self-confidence. By engaging in team-building exercises and learning about healthier lifestyles, environmental awareness, and facets of CNMI history and culture, participants gained valuable knowledge and experiences.

"4-H Camp Maga'lahi has been a rewarding experience for both the campers and our team," said NMC-CREES FCYD extension aide Beda Mundo. "It has been heartwarming to see the participants engage with their culture, explore the natural environment, and develop new friendships. We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to their personal growth and look forward to future camps. A big thank you to all of our partners for making this year's summer camp experience a memorable one."

NMC

A camper listens attentively as Ashley Sikayun from Northern Marianas College's Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services presents on the importance of proper nutrition and food groups.

"Congratulations to 4-H Marianas and the NMC-CREES Family, Community, & Youth Development Program team on another summer of providing excellent Positive Youth Development opportunities for youth ages 5 and older," said CREES interim dean Patricia Coleman.

For more information about 4-H Marianas programs, visit the NMC-CREES website at crees.marianas.edu or on Facebook and Instagram @4HMarianas. ***(NMC)***

NMC

One of the Junior campers from 4-H Marianas' Camp Maga'lahi practices her woodworking skills with an instructor from the Northern Marianas Technical Institute.

Business

PUERTO RICO BENTO

Saipan's rising go-to take-away resto/snack bar

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Puerto Rico Bento has slowly become the go-to take-away restaurant/snack bar on the island these past few years thanks to its tasty home-cooked meals and reasonable pricing.

Owners Angelica and Tony Lastimado said they owe all their success to the family matriarch, Angelina "Angie" De Andre, who opened the hole-in-the-wall establishment in 2012.

"It's a testament to the hard work of our mother who opened up the business and the support of her former co-workers and friends. Some people consider her as their mother because of the customer relationship that she established. We serve authentic Filipino food at an affordable price and the taste that you will think that you are in the Philippines," they said.

They also attribute the current buzz Puerto Rico Bento is generating to their current employees as well as loyal customers who continue to patronize their small restaurant and snack bar.

"Teamwork of everybody and serving food the way people on Saipan love them like our home-cooked meals is one of the reasons people keep coming," they said.

A popular treat is their Filipino empanadas that come in pork, chicken, and ham and cheese.

"We've been known to serve the best Filipino empanada and Filipino delicacies here on the island offering different flavors that will satisfy your cravings.

The Lastimados are also relieved that the COVID-19 pandemic is over as it ravaged the local economy and thus did a number on Puerto Rico Bento's potential earnings.

"It was very hard. We did a lot of precautionary measures to make sure that we are on standard when it comes to COVID-19 protocols and by that we have to spend some items out of our budget to make sure we are all safe entering our restaurant. We also cut off our business hours if there are no customers just to save electricity and manpower. We struggled financially because we have to borrow money from our friends who have businesses too."

Puerto Bento currently has a $50 special tray promo where that amount will get you a small tray of your choice of noodle dish, a small tray of fried chicken, and a platter of Filipino delicacies like cheese puto, kutsinta, lumpiang shanghai, vegetable lumpia, or empanada.

Puerto Rico Bento, who is celebrating its 12th anniversary this month, is located across the vacant lot before the U.S. Troop Store along Middle Road in Puerto Rico. It has a small dine-in place good for 12 customers and is open from 6am to 5pm. For more information or to order in advance, call (670) 322-0007 or (670) 285-0056.

MARK RABAGO
Puerto Rico Bento is celebrating its 12th anniversary this month.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Owners Angelica and Tony Lastimado in a file photo from Puerto Rico Bento's eighth-year anniversary celebration.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Puerto Rico Bento's bestselling empanadas.

Sri Lanka OKs new anti-corruption law as part of IMF economic bailout plan

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)—Sri Lanka's Parliament on Wednesday approved an anti-corruption legislation as the island nation attempts to overcome an unprecedented economic crisis.

The legislation is part of the prerequisites of an International Monterey Fund bailout package approved in March, under which nearly $3 billion in government budgetary support will be disbursed in stages to the bankrupt nation. The bailout is due for its first review in September.

The bill was passed without opposition in the 225-member parliament.

The IMF — which described Sri Lanka's debt as unsustainable — has stressed that anti-corruption and governance reforms are imperative in order to enable the Sri Lankans to benefit from the current economic reforms.

The development lender had said previously it was conducting — for the first time in an Asian country — an "in-depth governance diagnostic exercise" to assess corruption and vulnerabilities and "provide prioritized and sequenced recommendations."

The IMF Governance Diagnostic Report is set to be published in September.

The new legislation aims at preventing and eradicating bribery and corruption, and enhancing transparency while increasing accountability and enhancing public confidence in Sri Lankan administration, according to the bill.

Sri Lanka has been grappling with an unprecedented economic crisis since 2022, after suspending repayment of foreign loans because of a severe foreign currency crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, excessive borrowing by the government, and efforts by the central bank to stabilize the Sri Lankan rupee with scarce foreign reserves.

Sri Lanka's total debt has exceeded $83 billion, of which $41.5 billion is foreign and $42.1 billion is domestic.

In a bid to overcome the crisis, Sri Lanka has taken initiatives to restructure its both domestic and foreign debts.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis caused severe shortages of food, medicine, fuel, cooking gas and electricity last year which led to massive street protests that forced then-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and resign.

The economy has shown signs of improvement since current president Ranil Wickremesinghe took over as president last July. Shortages have been alleviated, power cuts have ended and the rupee has begun to strengthen.

IRS' new free-file tax return system has supporters, critics mobilizing

WASHINGTON (AP)—An IRS plan to test drive a new electronic free-file tax return system next year has got supporters and critics of the idea mobilizing to sway the public and Congress over whether the government should set up a permanent program to help people file their taxes without needing to pay somebody else to figure out what they owe.

On one side, civil society groups this week launched a coalition to promote the move toward a government-run free-file program. On the other, tax preparation firms like Intuit — the parent company of TurboTax — and H&R Block have been pouring millions into trying to stop the idea cold.

The advocacy groups are exponentially out-monied.

An April AP analysis found that overall, Intuit, H&R Block, and other private companies and advocacy groups for large tax preparation businesses, as well as proponents in favor of electronic free file, have reported spending $39.3 million since 2006 to lobby on "free-file" and other matters. Federal law doesn't require domestic lobbyists to itemize expenses by specific issue, so the sums are not limited to free-file.

Intuit spent at least $25.6 million since 2006 on lobbying, H&R Block about $9.6 million and the conservative Americans for Tax Reform roughly $3 million.

In contrast, the NAACP has spent $140,000 lobbying on "free-file" since 2006 and Public Citizen has spent $110,000 in the same time frame.

"What we have on our side is public opinion," said Igor Volsky, executive director of the liberal Groundwork Action advocacy group.

Volsky's organization and leaders from Public Citizen, the Center for the Study of Social Policy, Code for America, the Economic Security Project and others launched the "Coalition for Free and Fair Filing" on Wednesday. The group's mission is to "ensure all U.S. taxpayers can easily file tax returns and get the tax credits they deserve by safeguarding and expanding" the new IRS program.

"The overwhelming majority of people demand a free-file option," Volsky said. "Now the question for us is how do you channel that into effective political pressure."

The IRS in May released a report that said most taxpayers are interested in filing their taxes directly to the IRS for free, and concurrently announced plans to launch the pilot program for the 2024 filing season. The goal is to test a direct file system that will help the IRS decide whether to move forward with a more permanent program.

That idea has faced the immediate threat of budget cuts from congressional Republicans.

Nation

Gunman with 1,800 rounds launched 'murderous barrage of fire'

By STEVE KARNOWSKI and TRISHA AHMED
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP
Official portraits of Fargo, N.D., police officers involved in a shooting a day earlier are displayed during a news conference, Saturday, July 15, 2023, at Fargo City Hall

A man armed with 1,800 rounds of ammunition, a grenade and other explosives in his car unleashed a "murderous barrage of fire" as he ambushed officers who were investigating a routine crash, killing one and wounding two before a fourth stopped him and thwarted what authorities described as plans for further mayhem, officials said Wednesday.

Mohamad Barakat, 37, shot Officers Jake Wallin, Andrew Dotas and Tyler Hawes from inside his car on Friday, from about 15 to 20 feet away, before they could even reach for their guns, North Dakota Attorney General Drew Wrigley said at a news conference. Wallin was killed while Dotas and Hawes remain hospitalized in critical condition. Wrigley said Barakat also shot and injured a bystander, who was trying to run away when she was hit twice.

But Officer Zach Robinson, who just happened to be nearby, "disabled" Barakat's .223 -caliber rifle with a difficult shot from his own 9 mm handgun from about 75 feet (22.86 meters) away. Wrigley said Barakat — who was on the ground — then picked up a handgun and waved it around. As Robinson moved closer, he ordered Barakat to drop the gun 16 times, then killed him in a confrontation that lasted about two minutes, Wrigley said.

"In the wake of Mohamad Barakat's murderous, unprovoked attack, Officer Zach Robinson's use of deadly force was reasonable, it was necessary, it was justified, and in all ways, it was lawful," Wrigley told reporters. "Mohamad Barakat engaged in a savage attack. ... He unleashed what can only be described fairly as a murderous barrage of fire. But that isn't to say it wasn't precise. In fact, it was."

Investigators found 1,800 rounds of ammunition, three long guns, four handguns, numerous ammo magazines, explosives, canisters with gasoline and a homemade hand grenade in Barakat's car, he said. Officials released a photograph showing that eight of the magazines bore American flag stickers or decals.

Wrigley said Barakat also had a "shooting vest" that wasn't bulletproof, but had magazines in every pocket, and he had a suitcase of weapons, which he had rolled out of his apartment right before getting into his car. There was no mention of whether Barakat had any protective gear.

"When you look at the amount of ammunition this shooter had in his car, he was planning on more mayhem in our community," Fargo Mayor Tim Mahoney said. Police Chief David Zibolski said Barakat's target was unknown.

Wrigley provided the most detailed account yet that authorities have given about what happened during the gunfight. He said investigators are still trying to determine a motive for the attack on police but promised more details on the investigation at a news conference planned for Friday.

Wrigley said video evidence shows Barakat drove around and was nonchalant before opening fire.

"He's casing the place up and stalking his way in and sizing up his opportunity and then parks there and spends minutes watching the officers and waits until they are literally walking," Wrigley said. "That's when he lifts his firearm out the window and begins firing. It was an absolute ambush. There's no other way to describe that."

Wrigley said Robinson displayed "absolute courage under fire" as he moved away from the cover of his vehicle and exchanged fire with Barakat, including a shot that "incapacitated" the suspect's rifle — leaving roughly 20 rounds unused that could have been fired at other people. Robinson called in for help, and as he started approaching Barakat, he saw his colleagues were shot.

"He said, 'We have three officers down. Send everybody,'" Wrigley said. "And send everybody they did."

At some point Barakat was wounded, and was down on the ground, but he rearmed himself with a 9 mm handgun that he kept waving around, protected by his car, Wrigley said. Barakat continued to disobey Robinson's repeated commands to drop his gun. Robinson continued to move in and gave him one final command.

"'Put down the gun,' He does not. And the threat was neutralized by the officer," the attorney general said.

Shortly after the shooting, authorities, including the FBI, converged on a residential area about 2 miles (3.2 kilometers) away and evacuated residents of an apartment building to gather what they said was related evidence. Wrigley said Wednesday that authorities found more firearms at the apartment.

Border Patrol fails to assess medical needs for kids with preconditions

By LISET CRUZ and VALERIE GONZALEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Border Patrol does not have protocols for assessing medical needs of children with preexisting conditions, according to an independent report made public Tuesday on the death of an 8-year-old girl from Panama who was in federal custody.

The girl's death was "a preventable tragedy that resulted from" failures in "medical and custodial systems for children" within U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the agency that includes the Border Patrol, the report found.

It's the latest damning finding in the May 17 death of Anadith Danay Reyes Alvarez, who was on her ninth day in custody with family in Harlingen, Texas, in the Rio Grande Valley, one of the busiest corridors for migrant crossings. She had a chronic heart condition and sickle cell anemia.

An internal investigation found Border Patrol medical staff declined to review the girl's file.

The report made public Tuesday was conducted by an independent monitor working to enforce compliance with the latest terms of the Flores settlement agreement, a measure created to bring child welfare protections to children in immigration custody.

"The failure to consult a physician or a local health facility for more extensive testing raises fundamental concerns regarding the ability of the CBP medical system to care appropriately for children at elevated medical risk," the report says.

New leadership has been appointed to the agency's Office of the Chief Medical Officer, said Troy A. Miller, acting CBP commissioner.

The agency "has undertaken significant steps to address deficiencies identified by the ongoing investigation, as well as to ensure that medically fragile individuals and family units receive the best possible care and spend the minimum amount of time possible in CBP custody," Miller said.

Mabel Alvarez Benedicks, the girl's mother, told The Associated Press she reported her daughter's condition to officials when she and her family were being processed at the border, but officials failed to notify other staff at the time the family was taken to a second facility designated for families, a problem the monitor highlighted in a previous report to the court.

Six days later, the girl tested positive for influenza and had a temperature of 101.8 F (38.78 C), according to the report. She was given medication, put into isolation with her family but three days later, the girl and her mother made numerous visits to the medical unit, the report said.

Anadith reported vomiting and then a stomachache to the health provider, who failed to contact an on-call physician, the report showed. There is no protocol that highlights when an on-call physician should be contacted.

Alvarez begged officials to call an ambulance in order to hospitalize Anadith as her daughter felt pain in her bones, struggled to breathe and was unable to walk, but the health provider did not consider transferring the girl to a hospital, according to the report.

After Alvarez carried her daughter to the medical unit as she seized and became unresponsive, the girl was then taken to a hospital where she was pronounced dead, the report said.

The "poor clinical decision-making by the health providers" is responsible in Anadith's death, the report said.

"These inexcusable systemic failures were exacerbated by just a sheer disregard for her life," said Melissa Adamson, an attorney at the National Center for Youth Law.

Senate Judiciary panel to consider ethics rules for Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Senate Judiciary Committee is expected to vote Thursday on a new ethics code for the Supreme Court, an attempt to respond to recent revelations about justices' interactions with wealthy donors and others. Republicans are strongly opposed, arguing the ethics bill could "destroy" the high court.

The committee's legislation would impose new ethics rules on the court and a process to enforce them, including new standards for transparency around recusals, gifts and potential conflicts of interest. Democrats first pushed the legislation after reports earlier this year that Justice Clarence Thomas participated in luxury vacations and a real estate deal with a top GOP donor — and after Chief Justice John Roberts declined to testify before the committee about the ethics of the court.

Since then, news reports also revealed that Justice Samuel Alito had taken a luxury vacation with a GOP donor. And The Associated Press reported last week that Justice Sonia Sotomayor, aided by her staff, has advanced sales of her books through college visits over the past decade.

"Just about every week now, we learn something new and deeply troubling about the justices serving on the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land in the United States, and their conduct outside the courtroom," Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Dick Durbin, D-Ill., said this week. "Let me tell you, if I or any member of the Senate failed to report an all-expense paid luxury getaway or if we used our government staff to help sell books we wrote, we'd be in big trouble."

Even though the ethics legislation has little chance of passing the Senate — it would need at least nine GOP votes to pass, and Republicans appear united against it — Democrats say the spate of revelations means that enforceable standards on the court are necessary.

"The Roberts court has not been able to clean up its own mess," said Democratic Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse of Rhode Island, the lead sponsor of the ethics bill.

Asia

N. Korea no comment on American soldier who ran across border

AP
A group of tourists stand near a border station at Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone in Paju, South Korea, Tuesday, July 18, 2023.

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea wasn't responding Thursday to U.S. attempts to discuss the American soldier who bolted across the heavily armed border and whose prospects for a quick release are unclear at a time of high military tensions and inactive communication channels.

Pvt. Travis King, who was supposed to have been heading to Fort Bliss, Texas, after finishing a prison sentence in South Korea for assault, ran into North Korea while on a civilian tour of the border village of Panmunjom on Tuesday. He is the first known American held in North Korea in nearly five years.

"Yesterday the Pentagon reached out to counterparts in the (North) Korean People's Army. My understanding is that those communications have not yet been answered," Matthew Miller, a spokesperson for the U.S. State Department, told reporters Wednesday in Washington.

Miller said the White House, the Pentagon and the State Department are working together to gather information about King's well-being and whereabouts. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said the U.S. government will continue to work to ensure his safety and his return to his family.

The motive for King's border crossing is unknown. A witness on the same civilian tour said she initially thought his dash was some kind of stunt until she heard an American soldier on patrol shouting for others to try to stop him. But King had crossed the border in a matter of seconds.

King, 23, was serving in South Korea as a cavalry scout with the 1st Armored Division. He could be discharged from the military and face other potential penalties after being convicted of crimes in South Korea.

In February, a Seoul court fined him 5 million won ($3,950) by convicting him of assaulting an unidentified person and damaging a police vehicle in Seoul last October, according to a transcript of the verdict obtained by The Associated Press. The ruling said King had also been accused of punching a man at a Seoul nightclub, though the court dismissed that charge because the victim didn't want King to be punished.

It wasn't clear how King spent the hours from leaving the airport Monday until joining the Panmunjom tour Tuesday. The Army realized he was missing when he did not get off the flight in Texas as expected.

North Korea has previously held a number of Americans who were arrested for anti-state, espionage and other charges. But no other Americans were known to be detained since North Korea expelled American Bruce Byron Lowrance in 2018. During the Cold War, a small number of U.S. soldiers who fled to North Korea later appeared North Korean propaganda films.

"North Korea is not going to 'catch and release' a border-crosser because of its strict domestic laws and desire to deter outsiders from breaking them. However, the Kim regime has little incentive to hold an American citizen very long, as doing so can entail liabilities," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul.

"For Pyongyang, it makes sense to find a way of extracting some compensation and then expel an American for unauthorized entry into the country before an isolated incident escalates in ways that risk North Korean diplomatic and financial interests," he said. "In the best-case scenario, the American soldier will return home safely at the cost of some propaganda victory for Pyongyang, and U.S and North Korean officials will have an opportunity to resume dialogue and contacts that went stagnant during the pandemic."

Other experts say North Korea won't likely easily return King as he is a soldier who apparently voluntarily fled to North Korea, though many previous U.S. civilian detainees were released after the United States sent high-profile missions to Pyongyang to secure their freedom.

The U.S. and North Korea, who fought during the 1950-53 Korean War, still have no diplomatic ties. Sweden provided consular services for Americans in past cases, but Swedish diplomatic staff reportedly haven't returned since North Korea ordered foreigners to leave the country at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

China prepares for naval drills with Russia

China said Wednesday it has dispatched navy ships in preparation for joint exercises with Russia's sea forces, in a sign of Beijing's continuing support for Moscow's invasion of neighboring Ukraine.

The move comes despite the growing economic and humanitarian repercussions of the bloody 16 month-old air, sea and ground assault.

China claims to be neutral in the conflict, but has accused the U.S. and its allies of provoking Russia and has maintained robust economic, diplomatic and trade ties with Moscow. The exercise involves more than 10 ships and 30-plus aircraft, according to China's Xinhua News Agency.

The ministry and Xinhua gave no details, but the exercises are believed to be set for parts of the Sea of Japan in coming days.

China has reliably backed Russia in opposing U.S. condemnation of the Ukraine invasion in international forums, but says it won't provide arms to either side in the war.

The Defense Ministry said in a news release Wednesday that Chinese ships had linked up with their Russian counterparts at noon. Those included the guided missile destroyers Qiqihar and Guiyang, the guided missile frigates Zaozhuang and Rizhao and the supply ship Taihu. The Chinese ships carried four helicopters, the report said.

Russian participants included the frigates Gromkiy and Otlichnyy, which have been hosting visitors for a week in the financial hub of Shanghai, China's largest city and biggest port.

A pair of Russian navy ships are visiting China as the countries reaffirm their military ties amid the war in Ukraine.

The joint drills focus on ship-to-ship communications, maneuvering in formation and maritime search and rescue, according to Chinese reports.

The visit follows a meeting in Beijing between China's defense minister and the head of Russia's navy, the first formal military talks between the friendly neighbors since a short-lived mutiny by the Russian mercenary group Wagner.

China has reassured Russia of its continued support since the uprising. Minister of National Defense Li Shangfu told Russian Adm. Nikolai Yevmenov that China hoped for increased exchanges, joint exercises and other forms of cooperation to help defense ties "reach a new level," the Chinese Defense Ministry said.

China operates the world's largest navy by number of hulls and vastly outstrips Russia's navy in both size and technical ability. The countries' fleets have held a series of exercises and joint maneuvers since Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, as have their air forces. ***(AP)***

ASIAN BRIEFS

Taliban use gunfire to break up Afghan women protesting beauty salon ban

Dozens of Afghan women protested a beauty salon ban on Wednesday after the Taliban ordered their closure nationwide. Security forces used fire hoses, tasers and shot their guns into the air to break up the protest. The Taliban said earlier this month they were giving all salons in Afghanistan one month to wind down their businesses and close shop, drawing concern from international officials worried about the impact on female entrepreneurs. The Taliban say they are outlawing salons allegedly because they offer services forbidden by Islam and cause economic hardship for grooms' families during wedding festivities. The ruling came from the Taliban leader Hibatullah Akhundzada—the latest curb on the rights and freedoms of Afghan women and girls, following edicts barring them from education, public spaces and most forms of employment. In a rare sign of public opposition to Taliban orders, dozens of beauticians and makeup artists gathered in the capital of Kabul to protest the ban. ***(AP)***

Suicide bomber targets truck carrying troops in northwestern Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—A suicide bomber targeted a truck carrying security forces in northwestern Pakistan on Tuesday, wounding at least eight people, police said, amid increasing violence in the region. The attack took place in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province that borders Afghanistan and is a former stronghold of the militant Pakistani Taliban group, also known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing but suspicion is likely to fall on the Pakistani Taliban, who have stepped up attacks on security forces in recent months. The military truck was badly damaged. Police did not give any details about any troop casualties.

Yamuna river reaches iconic Taj Mahal's outer walls

AGRA, India (AP)—Rising water from the Yamuna river on Wednesday reached the outer boundary walls of the iconic Taj Mahal and submerged one of its adjacent gardens after record monsoon rains swelled rivers across northern India over the last three weeks. The flooding at the 17th-century white marble monument in Agra city came as heavy floods had killed at least 100 people in parts of north India, swept away houses and bridges and resulted in deadly landslides. On Wednesday, the red sandstone boundary walls of the Taj Mahal were surrounded by brown, muddy water, even as a flock of tourists thronged the historical monument left untouched by the river. Water from the overflowing Yamuna, however, flooded some low-lying houses near the monument, prompting officials to move residents to safer places. Local residents and officials said the river last touched the boundary walls of the monument in 2010.

World

Firefighters rushed to Greece as grueling heat wave takes toll

ATHENS, Greece (AP)—Firefighting aircraft and ground crews from other countries headed to Greece on Thursday to help battle wildfires that have intensified as a heat wave baked much of southern Europe in temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit).

New evacuations were ordered Wednesday as wildfires raged near Athens. In a round-the-clock battle to preserve forests, industrial facilities and vacation homes, evacuations continued for a third day Thursday along a highway connecting the capital to the southern city of Corinth.

In the town of Mandra, 25 kilometers (15 miles) west of Athens, resident Varvara Paraskevopoulou said the flames reached her doorstep before the Fire Service personnel did. She described fleeing the fire Tuesday and then returning to help residents trying to protect their properties themselves.

"We extinguished what we could by ourselves and managed to save some homes. As you'll see further up, three or four houses – residences and storage spaces – were burnt completely," Paraskevopoulou said.

Firefighting teams from Poland, Romania and Slovakia were due in Greece on Thursday, and Israel pledged to send two firefighting planes, adding to the four from Italy and France that were already operating outside Athens.

Southern Europe's second heat wave in as many weeks has brought extreme temperatures to Mediterranean countries. Temperatures in southern Greece were expected to reach 44 C (111 F) by the end of the week.

Alessandro Miani, president of the Italian Society of Environmental Doctors, warned that the aging populations in Italy and other countries are a concern because heat-related deaths most commonly happen in people older than 80.

"The excessive heat together with humidity can make difficult for sweat to evaporate, interfering with the body's ability to regulate its own temperature," Miani said.

Israeli army gunshots kill Palestinian man during clashes

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israeli troops shot and killed a Palestinian man near a shrine in the occupied West Bank on Thursday, Palestinian health officials said, in the latest bloodshed in a cycle of violence that has gripped the region.

The months of fighting with rising fatalities have shown no signs of abating and has become the worst violence between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank in nearly two decades.

Thursday's shooting took place as Israeli forces escorted Israeli worshippers, including the Israeli police chief and the head of the local Jewish settler council, to a site known as the biblical Joseph's Tomb in the Palestinian city of Nablus.

The shrine has long been a flashpoint for clashes between Palestinians and Israeli troops. Nablus has also become a central point of violence in the current escalation.

The Israeli military said that during the visit, suspects opened fire and threw explosives, rocks and burning tires at troops, who returned fire.

Palestinian news agency Wafa identified the man killed by Israeli fire as 19-year-old Badr al-Masri. It reported that three others were treated for wounds.

Fighting between Israel and the Palestinians in the West Bank intensified early last year when Israel launched near-nightly raids into Palestinian areas in the West Bank in response to a spate of Palestinian attacks against Israelis.

The violence has spiked this year, with more than 150 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire since the start of 2023 in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, according to a tally by The Associated Press.

Israeli says most of those killed have been militants, but stone-throwing youths protesting army raids and others not involved in the confrontations have also been killed.

At least 26 people have been killed in Palestinian attacks against Israelis during that time.

Israel says its almost-nightly raids raids across the West Bank are essential to dismantle militant networks and thwart future attacks. The Palestinians see the violence as a natural response to 56 years of occupation, including stepped-up settlement construction by Israel's government and increased violence by Jewish settlers.

US approves $1.3B package of military aid for Ukraine

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Pentagon announced a new $1.3 billion package of long-term military aid to Ukraine on Wednesday, including four air defense systems and an undisclosed number of drones.

The new assistance comes on the heels of a meeting Tuesday by defense and military leaders from around the globe to discuss ongoing efforts to give Ukraine the weapons it needs in its battle to retake territory seized by Russian forces.

Included in the aid, which is being provided under the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, will be funding for four National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System, or NASAMS, and munitions for them, as well as Phoenix Ghost and Switchblade drones.

Unlike the presidential drawdown authority that the Pentagon has used repeatedly over the past 17 months to pull weapons from its own stocks and quickly ship them to Ukraine, the USAI-funded equipment could take a year or two to get to the battlefront. As a result, this new package will do little to help Ukraine in its current offensive, but will help in future defense of its country.

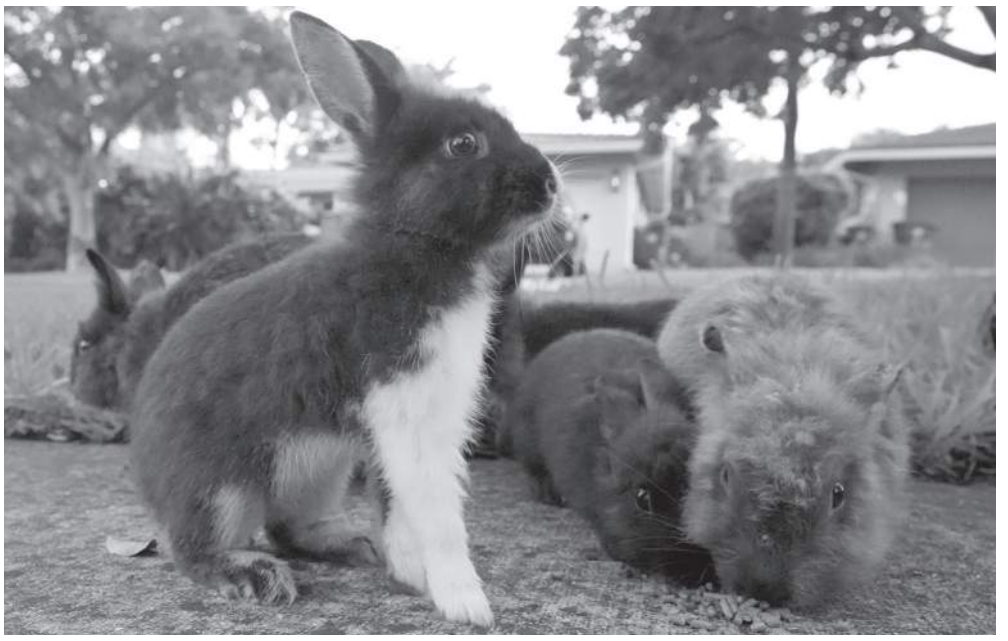
The aid package included funding for artillery, mine-clearing equipment, a variety of missiles and munitions, trucks and other vehicles, port security equipment and systems to counter drones.

Overall the U.S. has provided more than $40 billion in military aid to Ukraine since Russia invaded in Feb. 2022. Of that, about $18 billion has been in longer term USAI funding, including the latest announcement.

In Loving Remembrance of our Beloved
†Sabina Ingereklii Cabrera
Fondly known as "Sabi" & "Bina"
March 29, 1939 - July 11, 2023
In her Eternal Life, she now joins her:
Parents: Emiliano & Ngederong Ingereklii
Brothers: Domingo Ingereklii
Miguel Ingereklii
Marcelino Emiliano
Parents-In-Law: August & Matilde Cabrera
Husband: William Mesa Cabrera
Son: Eustace Ingereklii
Daughter: Florinda "Tunda" Ingereklii Cabrera
Granddaughter: Willani Jahnaiya Cabrera Camacho
She will be remembered in the hearts of her:
Children & Grandchildren
William I. Cabrera & †Jane Kintaro
Vladimir & Alysia (Journey, Zoey & Kyro)
Charlette C. & Manny A. Borja
Willdrow & Mary Lou (Leyanna & Tae (SaRai, NyLani & Saniyah), Willtun & Hannah (Emberly), Leilani, & Wil-Leina), Nathan, Kyle, and Chelsea & Alan (Leland)
Sylvia I. Cabrera & James Weakly
Willaine (Cody, Chris Allen, Willani, Cannibis, & Kingston), Nicole & Brandon (Kaeden & Sophia), Janelle & Joe (Sebastian), and Chardonney & Alex (Damian)
Jessica I. Cabrera & Aquinaldo P. Aquino
William, Jacob & Angel, Joevaughn, and Quianna
Joan C. & Claver Filibert
Ayela & D'Chine (Ella), W.Liam, and Arenka
†Florinda "Tunda" I. Cabrera & †Baby Willani Jahnaiya
Kaiya Journey
Evangeline I. Register
Shaun Register
Euginia I. & Roger Obakrairur
Lolemei & Brandon (Carter, Madeline, & Avery), Roger Jr. & Ashley (Katelaya, Keynai, & Kaylani), Franette & Sal (Aiden, Allan, & Arthaniel), Roni (Julissa), Ronalette (Adrian), and Rioni
Karla C. & Vincent Mareham
Luke & Maria (Tayvon, Rayven, & Luke Jr.,) Zoe & Walton, Jake, Laura, and Andrew
Brothers
†Marcelino & Betty Emiliano, Children, and Family
†Miguel & Yuriko Ingereklii, Children, and Family
†Domingo Ingereklii, Children, and Family
Elias & Floria Emiliano, Children, and Family
Salvador & †Betty Ingereklii, Children, and Family
Brothers and Sisters & In-Law
†Herman & †Lucia Cabrera, Children, and Family
†Edward & †Fermina Cabrera, Children, and Family
†George & Julie Cabrera, Children, and Family
August "Sonny" & Marie Cabrera, Children, and Family
†Rose Marie Cabrera, Children, and Family
†Marlyn Cabrera & Joe San Nicolas, Children, and Family
She is survived by numerous uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends.
Forever in our Hearts
Eucharistic celebration is offered daily at Santa Soledad Church at 6:00 p.m. from July 11 to 22, 2023. On Sunday, July 23, Eucharistic celebration will be offered at 10:30 a.m. On Monday, July 24, 2023, her remains will be escorted from the Borja Funeral Home at 7:45 a.m. to Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. followed by interment at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.
Thank You, Sulang, and Si Yu'us Ma'ase.
Your thoughts, prayers, and words of comfort are sincerely appreciated.
From the Family

Off The Wall

Invasion of fuzzy rabbits



AP

Rabbits gather to eat food left by a resident, Tuesday, July 11, 2023, in Wilton Manors, Fla.

WILTON MANORS, Fla. (AP)—When Alicia Griggs steps outside her suburban Fort Lauderdale home, Florida's latest invasive species comes a-hoppin' down the street: lionhead rabbits.

The bunnies, which sport an impressive flowing mane around their heads, want the food Griggs carries. But she also represents their best chance of survival and moving where this domesticated breed belongs: inside homes, away from cars, cats, hawks, Florida heat and possibly government-hired exterminators.

Griggs is spearheading efforts to raise the $20,000 to $40,000 it would cost for a rescue group to capture, neuter, vaccinate, shelter and then give away the estimated 60 to 100 lionheads now populating Jenada Isles, an 81-home community in Wilton Manors.

They are descendants of a group a backyard breeder illegally let loose when she moved away two years ago.

"They really need to be rescued. So we've tried to get the city to do it, but they're just dragging their feet," Griggs said. "They think that if they do that, then they'll have to get rid of iguanas and everything else that people don't want around."

Monica Mitchell, whose East Coast Rabbit Rescue would likely lead the effort, said capturing, treating and finding homes for them "is not an easy process." Few veterinarians treat rabbits and many prospective owners shy away when they find out how much work the animals require. Griggs agreed.

"People don't realize they're exotic pets and they're complicated. They have a complicated digestive system and they have to eat a special diet," said Griggs, a real estate agent. "You can't just throw any table scraps at them."

Wilton Manors is giving Griggs and other supporters time to raise money and relocate the rabbits rather than exterminate them, even though the city commission voted in April to do just that after receiving an $8,000 estimate from a trapping company.

The vote came after some residents complained the lionheads dig holes, chew outdoor wiring and leave droppings on sidewalks and driveways. City commissioners also feared the rabbits could spread into neighboring communities and cities and become a traffic hazard if they ventured onto major streets.

"The safety of this rabbit population is of utmost importance to the City, and any decision to involve ourselves will be certain to see these rabbits placed into the hands of people with a passion to provide the necessary care and love for these rabbits," Police Chief Gary Blocker said in a statement.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, which often culls invasive animals, has told the city it will not intercede. The rabbits pose no immediate threat to wildlife.

Lionhead rabbits aren't the only invasive species causing headaches or worse for Floridians. Burmese pythons and lionfish are killing off native species. Giant African snails eat stucco off homes and carry human disease. Iguanas destroy gardens. Like the Wilton Manors lionhead rabbits, those populations all started when people illegally turned them loose.

But unlike those species, Florida's environment is not friendly to lionheads. Instead of the 7 to 9 years they live when properly housed, their lives outdoors are nasty, brutal and shortened.

The lionheads' heavy coat makes them overheat during Florida summers and their lack of fear makes them susceptible to predators. Munching on lawns is not a healthy diet. Their illnesses go untreated. They need owners.

"Domesticated (rabbits) released into the environment are not equipped to thrive on their own," said Eric Stewart, executive director of the American Rabbit Breeders Association. He said the breeder who released them should be prosecuted, a path the city has not pursued.

The Wilton Manors colony survives and grows only because lionheads breed like the rabbits they are, with females birthing litters of two-to-six offspring every month, starting when they are about 3 months old.

On a recent morning in Jenada Isles, clutches of two to 10 bunnies dotted the streets and lawns, the bravest hopping up to residents and visitors in search of treats.

A large group of rabbits gathered on the driveway of Gator Carter, who puts out food for them. He said the lionheads bring the neighborhood joy, and his two young grandchildren love giving them carrots.

"People drive by, stop, love 'em, feed 'em," Carter said. "They don't bother me. We have a couple Airbnbs on the island here and the people (guests) are just amazed that the rabbits come right up to them."

But Jon King said he wants the rabbits gone soon. They dig in his yard and he spent $200 repairing his outdoor lights after they damaged the wiring. He bought rabbit repellent, but that didn't work, and his little dog doesn't scare them: "He's their best friend."

"Every morning, I get up and first thing I do is cover up the holes and chase them out of the backyard. I like them, I just wish they would go somewhere else," King said. "Rescue would be great."

Science & Technology

RARE FOSSIL SUGGESTS

Mammals may have hunted down dinosaurs for dinner

NEW YORK (AP)—An unusual find in China suggests some early mammals may have hunted dinosaur for dinner.

The fossil shows a badger-like creature chomping down on a small, beaked dinosaur, their skeletons intertwined. The find comes from a site known as "China's Pompeii," where mud and debris from long-ago volcanoes buried creatures in their tracks.

"It does seem like this is a prehistoric hunt, captured in stone, like a freeze frame," University of Edinburgh paleontologist Steve Brusatte, who was not involved with the study, said in an email.

The fossil, described Tuesday in the journal Scientific Reports, shows two creatures from around 125 million years ago, during the Cretaceous period.

Even though the mammal is much smaller, researchers think it was attacking the dinosaur when they both got caught in the volcanic flow, said study author Jordan Mallon, a paleobiologist at the Canadian Museum of Nature. The mammal is perched on the dinosaur, its paws gripping the reptile's jaw and a hind limb while its teeth plunge into the ribcage.

"I've never seen a fossil like this before," Mallon said.

That mammals ate dinosaur meat had been proposed before: another fossil showed a mammal died with dinosaur remains in its gut. But the new find also suggests that mammals may have actually preyed on dinosaurs several times their size, and didn't just scavenge ones that were already dead, Mallon said.

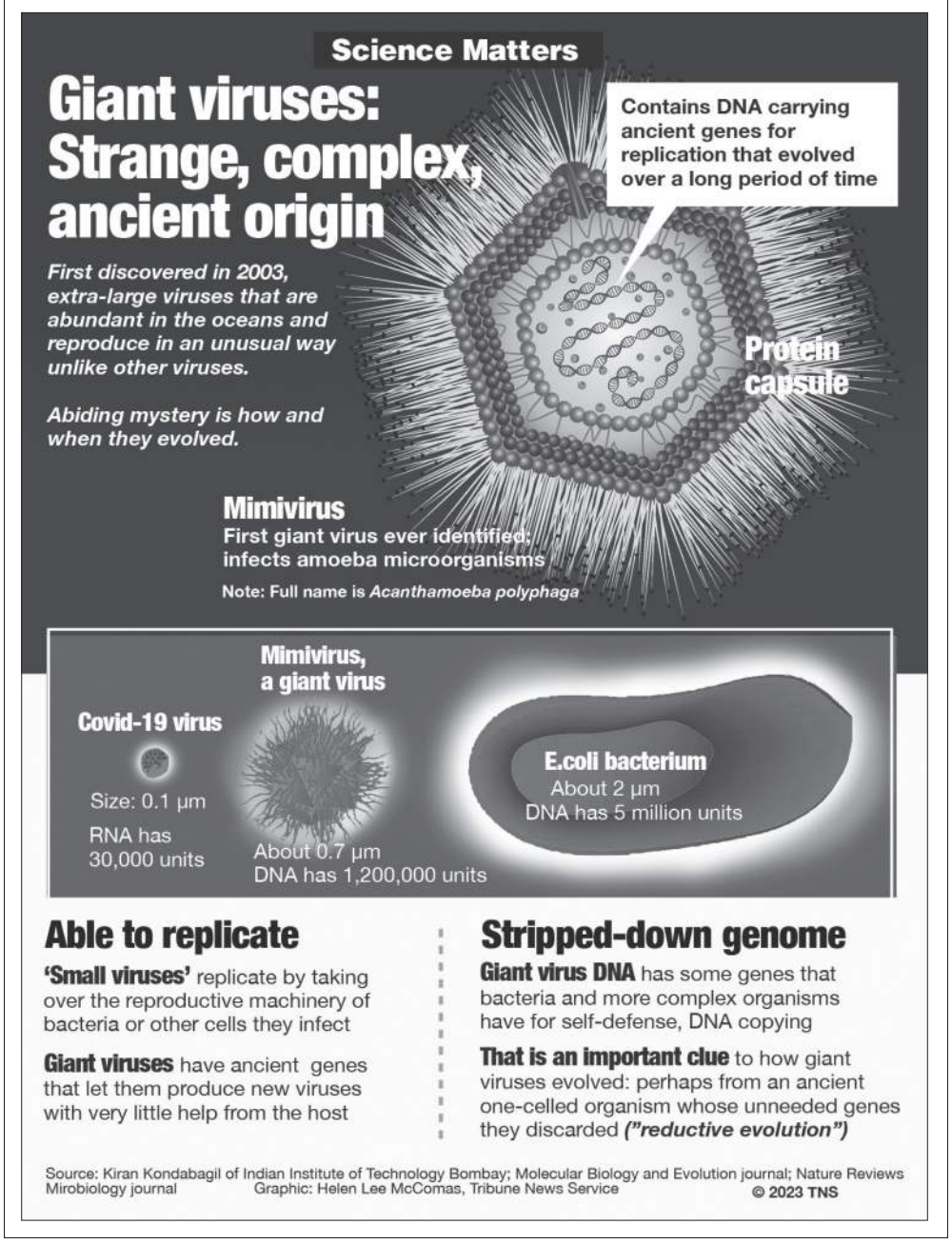
"This turns the old story on its head," Brusatte said. "We're used to thinking of the Age of Dinosaurs as a time when dinosaurs ruled the world, and the tiny mammals cowered in the shadows."

The study authors acknowledged that there have been some fossil forgeries known from this part of the world, which Mallon said was a concern when they started their research. But after doing their own preparations of the skeletons and analyzing the rock samples, he said they were confident that the fossil—which was found by a farmer in 2012—was genuine, and would welcome other scientists to study the fossil as well.

The mammal in the fossil duo is the meat-eating Repenomamus robustus, about the size of a house cat, Mallon said. The dinosaur—Psittacosaurus lujiatunensis—was about as big as a medium-sized dog with a parrotlike beak.

This species was a plant eater, but other dinosaurs were meat eaters or ate both. In the end, dinosaurs were probably still eating mammals more often than the other way around, Mallon said.

"And yet we now know that the mammals were able to fight back, at least at times," he said.


Science Matters
Giant viruses: Strange, complex, ancient origin
First discovered in 2003, extra-large viruses that are abundant in the oceans and reproduce in an unusual way unlike other viruses.
Abiding mystery is how and when they evolved.
Contains DNA carrying ancient genes for replication that evolved over a long period of time
Protein capsule
Mimivirus
First giant virus ever identified; infects amoeba microorganisms
Note: Full name is Acanthamoeba polyphaga
Mimivirus, a giant virus
Covid-19 virus
Size: 0.1 µm
RNA has 30,000 units
About 0.7 µm
DNA has 1,200,000 units
E.coli bacterium
About 2 µm
DNA has 5 million units
Able to replicate
'Small viruses' replicate by taking over the reproductive machinery of bacteria or other cells they infect
Giant viruses have ancient genes that let them produce new viruses with very little help from the host
Stripped-down genome
Giant virus DNA has some genes that bacteria and more complex organisms have for self-defense, DNA copying
That is an important clue to how giant viruses evolved: perhaps from an ancient one-celled organism whose unneeded genes they discarded ("reductive evolution")
Source: Kiran Kondabagil of Indian Institute of Technology Bombay; Molecular Biology and Evolution journal; Nature Reviews Mirobiology journal
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service
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Life & Style

CMT pulls Jason Aldean's new music video over outcry

By MARIA SHERMAN
AP Music Writer

Country music star Jason Aldean 's latest music video for "Try That In A Small Town," lasted just one weekend on Country Music Television before the network pulled it in response to an outcry over its setting and lyrics.

In the video, Aldean—who has been awarded country music artist of the decade by the Academy of Country Music—performs in front of the Maury County Courthouse in Columbia, Tennessee. This is the site of the 1946 Columbia race riot and the 1927 mob lynching of an 18-year-old Black teenager named Henry Choate.

Aldean's video, which was released last Friday, has received fervent criticism online, with some claiming the visual is a "dog whistle" and others labeling it "pro-lynching."

Interspersed between performance footage of Aldean are news clips of violent riots and flag burning. A Fox News chyron reads: "State of emergency declared in Georgia."

"Cuss out a cop, spit in his face / Stomp on the flag and light it up / Yeah, ya think you're tough," Aldean, who is from Macon, Georgia, sings. "Got a gun that my granddad gave me / They say one day they're gonna round up / Well, that shit might fly in the city, good luck / Try that in a small town."

"There is not a single lyric in the song that references race or points to it—and there isn't a single video clip that isn't real news footage—and while I can try and respect others to have their own interpretation of a song with music, this one goes too far," Aldean wrote in a tweet posted Tuesday.

AMY HARRIS
Jason Aldean performs during CMA Fest 2022 in Nashville, Tenn., on June 9, 2022.

The production company behind the video, Tacklebox, said in a statement Wednesday that it picked a "popular filming location outside of Nashville" that had been used on numerous productions, including holiday films starring Tanya Tucker and one starring Mario Lopez and Jana Kramer.

"Any alternative narrative suggesting the music video's location decision is false," the company said, adding that Aldean did not choose the location.

Aldean has long identified as conservative, and has been a vocal supporter of former President Donald Trump. "My political views have never been something I've hidden from," he tweeted Tuesday.

The video and its subsequent removal from CMT quickly blew up into one of the periodic culture war clashes, with several conservative figures speaking out in favor of Aldean—including Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem and Colorado Republican Rep. Lauren Boebert.

This isn't the first time Aldean has been at the center of controversy. In 2015, he made headlines for dressing as rapper Lil Wayne as a Halloween costume, wearing blackface makeup and a wig with dreadlocks.

Writers urge AI companies to honor copyrights

NEW YORK (AP)—James Patterson, Suzanne Collins and Margaret Atwood are among thousands of writers endorsing an open letter from the Authors Guild urging AI companies to obtain permission before incorporating copyrighted work into their technologies.

"Millions of copyrighted books, articles, essays, and poetry provide the 'food' for AI systems, endless meals for which there has been no bill," the letter reads in part. "You're spending billions of dollars to develop AI technology. It is only fair that you compensate us for using our writings, without which AI would be banal and extremely limited."

The letter is addressed to OpenAI, Meta, Microsoft and other AI producers. The Guild announced Tuesday that other signers include the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelists Jennifer Egan, Michael Chabon and Louise Erdrich, as well as authors Jonathan Franzen, Celeste Ng, Nora Roberts and Ron Chernow.

AP
Author James Patterson appears at an event to promote his joint novel with former President Bill Clinton, "The President is Missing," in New York on June 5, 2018, left, and Author Margaret Atwood appears at the Glamour Women of the Year Awards in New York on Nov. 11, 2019.

"If creators aren't compensated fairly, they can't afford to create," Roberts said in a statement. "If writers aren't paid to write, they can't afford to write. Human beings create and write stories human beings read. We're not robots to be programmed, and AI can't create human stories without taking from human stories already written."

American model Gigi Hadid and friend don't let marijuana arrest spoil Cayman Islands vacation

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—American model Gigi Hadid and a friend went ahead with a vacation in the Cayman Islands after local authorities arrested the pair for marijuana possession and later released them.

Hadid

Hadid, who arrived on a private aircraft from the U.S., was arrested after Customs and Border Control agents searched her luggage and found a small amount of cannabis, the agency said in a statement Tuesday.

Officials identified her as Jelena Noura Hadid, which is the 28-year-old model's legal name.

Hadid and her friend arrived in the Cayman Islands on July 10 and pleaded guilty on July 12 to importing a controlled drug and a drug utensil. They were fined more than $1,200, with no conviction recorded, authorities said.

"All's well that ends well," Hadid posted Tuesday on Instagram, along with a photo of her and a friend at the beach.

A representative told The Associated Press that Hadid had bought the marijuana legally in New York City with a medical license, and that her record remains clear.

The Cayman Islands legalized medical marijuana in May 2017, but recreational use remains illegal. Local laws dictate a prison sentence of up to a year and/or a fine for possession of up to 12 grams of marijuana for a first offense.

Aging mother refuses to discuss the inevitable

DEAR ABBY
BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: My mom turns 85 this year. When my father died of congestive heart failure 10 years ago, our family had a clear understanding of Dad's wishes about the end-of-life care he wanted. We knew he didn't want "heroic measures," like a feeding tube or to be on a ventilator. Since Dad had been sick for a few years and he was open to these discussions, Mom felt confident making choices for his care when he could no longer communicate his wishes.

With Mom, it is a completely different story. She refuses to have conversations about this with my siblings and me, and accuses us of being "morbid." Although she has a will, she has made no decisions about a proxy or for her care. Do you have any suggestions for how we can help Mom feel more comfortable having these conversations and documenting her wishes?

LOVING, NOT MORBID, DAUGHTER

DEAR DAUGHTER: Offer your mother resources that normalize discussions about end-of-life wishes and care. Helping to ensure that she receives the care she wants is not morbid. It is a gift to her and your family. If something happens to a loved one and they can no longer communicate for themselves, you should not have to guess what their wishes would be in a crisis.

Start with the perfect gift for Mom: "Finish Strong: Putting Your Priorities First at Life's End," a book written by Barbara Coombs Lee, the president emerita and senior adviser of Compassion & Choices. Compassion & Choices is an organization I have mentioned before in my column and to which I contribute. It offers a multitude of resources, including "My End-of-Life Decisions: An Advance Planning Guide and Toolkit." It would be a helpful starting point for a discussion with your mother. For more information, visit compassionandchoices.org.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I am a divorced dad with two adult daughters and a 14-year-old daughter. My older daughters are learning to be responsible for themselves, and I'm proud of them. The question I need help with involves my youngest. She doesn't want to go to school. She stays awake on the phone. I have taken two of them from her, yet her mom keeps giving her phones. I have unplugged the Wi-Fi. I've tried talking to my ex about this to no avail.

I'm not perfect. I have said things I regret, but I have always loved my daughters. I have explained that my teen is pushing me away, but my ex doesn't care. My heart hurts. Must I just let go?

HEART-HURTING DAD

DEAR DAD: Your ex-wife appears to be irresponsible in the care of your daughter. She is also attempting to alienate the girl from you. It is very important to find out why your 14-year-old doesn't want to go to school. Is she being bullied? Has she fallen so far behind that she's afraid she can't catch up? Did the COVID lockdown impair her social skills as it has many other students?

Once you know what you are dealing with, you may be able to do more than lecture her about her truancy, and that is what I am recommending. She may need counseling.

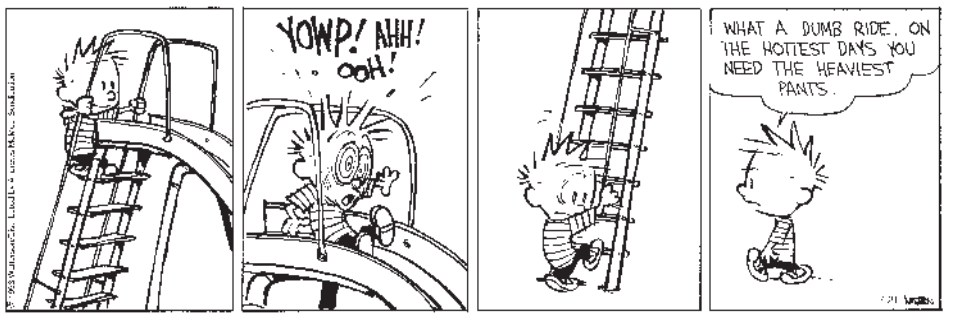
■■■

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

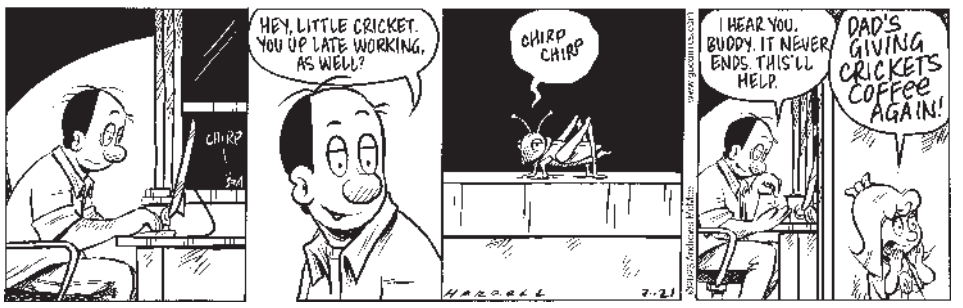


Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


CHIRP
HEY, LITTLE CRICKET. YOU UP LATE WORKING, AS WELL?
CHIRP CHIRP
I HEAR YOU, BUDDY. IT NEVER ENDS. THIS'LL HELP.
DAD'S GIVING CRICKETS COFFEE AGAIN!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Plead
4 Small ammo
7 TV's woman of letters?
12 Suffix with cash
13 Mine yield
14 Strand during a blizzard
15 French vineyard
16 Endure
18 Aachen article
19 Andean animal
20 Favorites
22 Sign before Virgo
23 Trudge
27 Opposite of paleo-
29 Long step
31 Astronomer Carl
34 Smidgens
35 Decrees
37 Letter sealer
38 Chore
39 Roofing goo
41 Soprano — Huang
45 Acid type
47 Indian bread
48 Support
52 Rx overseer
53 Old Testament book
54 That lady
55 Have brunch
56 Corny, as a joke
57 Still, in verse
58 "Treasure Island" monogram

DOWN
1 Upper arm muscle
2 Haunting
3 Hog's "hello"
4 Soup serving
5 Scouring pad brand
6 Biological bristles
7 Travel permit
8 Play segment
9 PBS funder
10 Diarist Anaïs
11 Moreover
17 Med. plan options
21 Nosh at midnight
23 Substitute
24 Torched
25 — Mae (Whoopi's "Ghost" role)
26 — Moines
28 Tolkien creature
30 Aunt, in Mexico
31 Fixed
32 Nabokov novel
33 PX patrons
36 Pack cargo
37 Squirm in pain
40 Come up
42 Deduce
43 Tennis star Rafael
44 Pesky insects
45 Party time, briefly
46 Skater Nathan —, 2022 Olympic gold medalist
48 "Quiet!"
49 As well
50 Request
51 Born

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	E	E		O	P	A	L		V	A	M	P
H	E	N		Z	E	R	O		E	D	I	T
E	N	D	P	A	P	E	R		R	I	G	A
			E	A	R		S	E	A	B	A	S	S
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M	I	V		S	R	S		A	N	D	E	S
P	R	O	S			F	I	G		A	I	L	S
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Y	E	L	L			M	I	S	S	P	E	N	D
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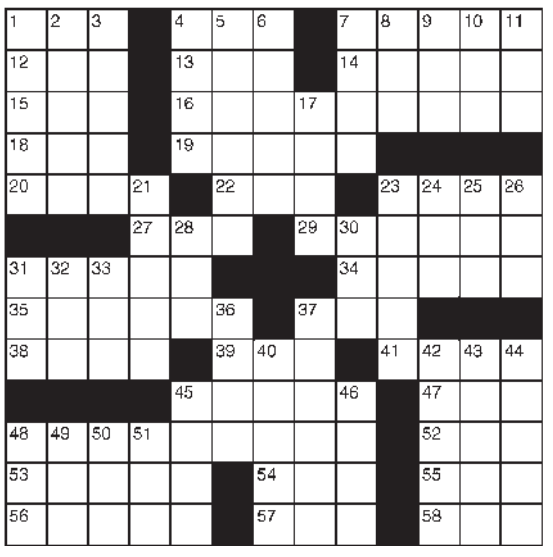
Yesterday's answer 7-21



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Juno Temple, 34; Justin Bartha, 45; Josh Hartnett, 45; Jon Lovitz, 66.

Happy Birthday: Set yourself up for advancement. Learn all you can, develop your skills and reach out to those who can answer your questions. Take the initiative and channel your energy into learning, traveling and taking more interest in what others are doing. These interactions will be your ticket to information that sparks your imagination and points you in a positive direction. Leave no stone unturned. Your numbers are 7, 18, 23, 27, 32, 38, 46.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* You can't please everyone, but with focus and discipline, you will delight yourself. Take responsibility for your happiness, and socialize with people who offer plenty of options and food for thought. Don't miss out on romance, socializing and self-improvement. Live life your way. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Don't lose sight of your budget and intentions. Look for a direct path to avoid confusion and mixed emotions regarding how to proceed. Pay more attention to what moves you and less to what others do or say. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20)*: Stay focused on what you can accomplish, and don't stop until you are satisfied with the results. Your input will put you in a good position and help sway anyone on the fence. Mix business with pleasure, and you'll gain ground. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Learn and apply information or experience to whatever comes your way. Your tenacity and courage will push you to turn your plan into a reality. Don't stop short of what you want or give in to obstacles. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Too much too quickly will put you in a vulnerable position. Slow down, be observant and choose your direction based on intuition and cost. Look at unwanted change as an opportunity to try something new. Know when to say no and keep moving forward. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Your enthusiasm will open doors. Don't deny yourself an opportunity for the wrong reason. You'll get others to see things your way if you show empathy and understanding. A challenge will help build confidence and teach you not to give up. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Identify your physical and financial needs. Refuse to let anyone lead you down the wrong path. Do what's best for you, and don't take risks that can cause loss, injury or illness. Use experience, knowledge and charm to reach your goal. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Size up your situation and map out your best route to victory. The less you reveal about your plans, the easier it will be to forge ahead. Channel your energy into taking the necessary precautions while pushing your way to the top. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Pace yourself and question the sources you are getting your information from before you make a move. Don't disregard your intelligence or ability to see through others. Trust your instincts and work by yourself. Learn from experience and how others treat you. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Stop second-guessing yourself and take a stance. Opportunity is apparent, but there will be plenty of diversions and hurdles to jump along the way. Be sensitive to what others are experiencing, but don't pay for mistakes that don't belong to you. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Participate in events that connect you to people who can offer insight into something you want to pursue. Partnerships will experience problems if intentions and honesty are left unspoken. Simplify matters by using common sense, integrity and truth. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Follow your heart regarding your passions. Be creative, unique and ready to conquer the world. Stop dreaming and start acting; progress will motivate you to finish the journey you mapped out for yourself. Leave nothing to chance. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are steadfast, driven and helpful. You are charitable and charming.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			9				5	
4	8				6			
		5	8	2				
	3		2		5	4		
2		9				5	1	
8				3				2
	1	2	3					6
		3	6	8				
		8		4			7	5

Difficulty: ★★★★ 7/21

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesturday's Answer

9	6	7	5	3	8	2	4	1
8	3	5	2	4	1	7	6	9
2	4	1	6	7	9	8	3	5
4	1	9	3	6	2	5	8	7
3	8	2	9	5	7	6	1	4
7	5	6	1	8	4	9	2	3
5	2	3	7	1	6	4	9	8
6	7	8	4	9	3	1	5	2
1	9	4	8	2	5	3	7	6

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/20

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

POETS, POEMS & POETIC POETRY Solution: 6 letters

M	A	Y	A	A	N	G	E	L	O	U	K	I	A	H
T	E	A	C	H	E	V	I	T	A	R	R	A	N	S
E	T	S	S	E	M	O	T	I	O	N	Y	O	T	E
O	S	Y	S	S	M	H	T	Y	H	R	S	R	Y	H
P	O	L	U	A	D	A	E	H	O	N	U	C	G	G
N	R	L	E	R	G	C	S	T	I	C	S	E	E	U
A	F	A	S	H	A	E	S	K	T	A	I	R	L	H
L	T	B	R	P	N	P	C	U	S	R	M	U	E	N
L	R	L	D	I	E	I	R	C	R	D	I	T	G	O
A	E	E	L	A	D	E	H	E	A	T	L	A	A	T
R	B	S	K	Y	S	O	S	T	Y	L	E	R	U	S
A	O	E	L	D	O	E	T	H	E	M	E	E	G	G
G	R	I	R	L	U	O	S	O	N	N	E	T	N	N
D	M	O	N	O	M	A	T	O	P	O	E	I	A	A
E	W	A	L	T	W	H	I	T	M	A	N	L	L	L

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Card, Dr. Seuss, Edgar Allan Poe, Elegy, Emily Dickinson, Emotion, Haiku, Langston Hughes, Language, Lines, Literature, Maya Angelou, Message, Narrative, Onomatopoeia, Pace, Phrase, Read, Rhythm, Robert Frost, School, Simile, Sonnet, Soul, Speaker, Story, Structure, Style, Syllables, Teach, Theme, Walt Whitman, Words

Yesterday's Answer: Sharpener

To purchase **WONDERWORD** books, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Urías, Henderson power Orioles past Dodgers and into 1st place in AL East

BALTIMORE (AP)—The Baltimore Orioles moved past the Tampa Bay Rays and into the AL East lead for the first time this season, beating the Los Angeles Dodgers 8-5 on Wednesday behind three RBIs from Ramón Urías to avoid what would have been their first time getting swept in 14 months.

Gunnar Henderson homered and scored three runs and Urías doubled twice for the Orioles (58-37), who at .611 moved into front of the Rays (60-39), who dropped .606 with a 5-1 loss at Texas. Baltimore is 50-30 following an 8-7 start while the Rays have lost 11 of 14.

The Orioles go to Tampa Bay for a four-game series starting Thursday.

Los Angeles (55-40) had won eight of nine after taking the first two games of the series. Baltimore (58-37) has not been swept in a series since May 2022.

James Outman hit an opposite-field home run in the fourth off Dean Kremer, the first home run to left at Camden Yards in 4.161 plate appearances by left-handed batters at the ballpark since the left field wall was lengthened and raised before the 2022 season.

Danny Coulombe (3-1) allowed one hit in 2 1/3 scoreless innings, while Julio Urías (7-6) gave eight runs, matching his career high. The eight earned runs off the 26-year-old left-hander were a career worst.

"It just didn't seem like he was really comfortable out there," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "Just ran out of bullets. The stuff wasn't sharp. With that, it led to some soft contact early. Didn't have command. It was just one of those days."

AP

Baltimore Orioles' Gunnar Henderson, left, slides home against Los Angeles Dodgers catcher Austin Barnes to score on a double by Ramon Urias during the first inning of a baseball game Wednesday, July 19, 2023, in Baltimore.

ANGELS 7, YANKEES 3

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Taylor Ward and Luis Rengifo hit two-run homers, Chase Silseth struck out a career-high 10 in his first big league outing in seven weeks and Los Angeles completed a series sweep of New York.

The Halos swept a three-game series from the Yankees for the first time since 2009. Los Angeles has won four of five to get back over .500 at 49-48.

Giancarlo Stanton and Franchy Cordero homered for the Yankees, who have lost four straight and nine of 11. Carlos Rodón (0-3) allowed six runs, four hits and five walks in 4 1/3 innings.

Silseth (2-1) allowed one run and five hits in 5 2/3 innings.

TWINS 6, MARINERS 3

SEATTLE (AP)—Max Kepler scored the go-ahead run on a passed ball in the eighth inning and Minnesota pitchers struck out 14 in a win over Seattle.

Kepler scored from third when a pitch from reliever Andrés Muñoz (2-3) got past catcher Tom Murphy, breaking a 3-3 tie. Kepler also hit a solo homer in the fifth inning. Alex Kirillof hit a two-run homer in the ninth.

The Mariners also had a pair of homers. Tom Murphy connected in the sixth inning, and Eugenio Suárez had a two-run shot in the seventh.

Emilio Pagan (4-1) was the winner. Jhoan Duran pitched a scoreless ninth inning for his 16th save.

ATHLETICS 6, RED SOX 5

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—JJ Bleday, Cody Thomas and Jace Peterson each hit two-run home runs, and Oakland won its second straight following an eight-game skid by hitting three or more homers in a game for the 11th time this season.

Bleday's homer was his second in as many days, while Thomas' drive was the first of his career. Peterson connected for his sixth in the fourth inning.

Angel Felipe (1-0) retired four batters for his first career victory. Trevor May picked up his eighth save.

Justin Turner hit his 15th home run for the Red Sox, winners of eight of their previous 10. Boston lost consecutive games for the first time since June 28-29 against Miami. Brayan Bello (7-6) allowed five hits and six runs in four innings.

PIRATES 7, GUARDIANS 5

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Ji Man Choi and Jared Triolo hit two-run singles in a five-run seventh inning helped by an overturned call, and Pittsburgh ended a five-game skid with a come-from-behind win over Cleveland.

Pittsburgh rallied from a 4-0 deficit in the fifth. The Pirates had been outscored 21-1 in the first two games of the series.

Josh Bell homered in the eighth off Ryan Borucki (1-0), and David Bednar struck out one in a perfect ninth for his 18th save in 19 chances.

Sam Hentges (1-2) took the loss. Aaron Civale allowed two runs and five hits in 5 1/3 innings.

RANGERS 5, RAYS 1

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Leody Taveras and Jonah Heim homered as AL West-leading Texas stretched its winning streak to six games with a win over slumping Tampa Bay, which slipped into second place in the AL East, percentage points behind Baltimore.

Taveras snapped an 0-for-12 slide when he homered on the first pitch of the third inning against Zack Littell (0-2). He also added an RBI single.

Heim's 14th homer was a three-run shot in the eighth.

Brock Burke (4-2) struck out three over two scoreless innings in relief of starter Jon Gray, who departed with one out in the fifth because of a bruised left shin after being hit by a comebacker.

Tampa Bay (60-39) dropped to .606 with the loss, while the Orioles (58-37) beat the Dodgers and improved to .611.

CARDINALS 6, MARLINS 4

ST. LOUIS (AP)—Nolan Gorman hit a three-run homer and had four RBIs to help St. Louis beat Mami for its second series sweep this season.

Nolan Arenado's RBI single and Gorman's 19th homer built a 4-0 lead in the first off NL Cy Young Award winner Sandy Alcantara, and the Marlins' losing streak reached a season-high six.

St. Louis had just one previous sweep this season, from May 12-14 at Boston. The Cardinals have won a season-high five in a row, moving ahead of Pittsburgh and out of the NL Central cellar.

Alcantara (3-9) gave up four runs and eight hits in six innings, dropping to 0-3 in his last four starts.

Zack Thompson (2-2), pitching for the first time in 20 days, allowed three hits in two scoreless innings.

ASTROS 4, ROCKIES 1

DENVER (AP)—Brandon Bielak pitched one-hit ball into the sixth inning, helping Houston split the two-game series with Colorado.

Chas McCormick hit his 12th homer of the season for Houston. Bielak (5-5) struck out four and walked three in 5 2/3 innings. Phil Maton, Rafael Montero, Ryne Stanek and Ryan Pressly then combined for 3 1/3 innings of one-hit relief.

C.J. Cron spoiled the shutout bid with a home run off Pressly in the ninth.

Colorado starter Austin Gomber (8-8) lost for the first time since June 19 at Cincinnati. He was charged with four runs and eight hits in six innings.

REDS 3, GIANTS 1

CINCINNATI (AP)—Will Benson hit a three-run homer, and Cincinnati ended San Francisco's seven-game win streak.

Graham Ashcraft (5-7) pitched into the seventh inning as Cincinnati stopped a six-game slide that dropped the surprising Reds into second in the NL Central, trailing Milwaukee. It was a season-worst skid for Cincinnati.

The Reds (51-46) had four hits. They had been 0-9 this year when they finished with four or fewer hits.

Blake Sabol homered for San Francisco, and Ross Stripling (0-3) pitched six innings of three-run ball. The Giants (54-42) are chasing the Dodgers in the NL West.

METS 5, WHITE SOX 1

NEW YORK (AP)—Justin Verlander pitched eight innings and rookie Brett Baty homered as New York won its third straight and for the ninth time in 13 games.

Baty contributed an RBI groundout during a four-run fourth, turned in fine defensive plays at third and scored from first on Brandon Nimmo's two-out double.

Fellow rookie Francisco Álvarez grounded an RBI single in the fourth, and Luis Guillorme added a sacrifice fly. The 40-year-old Verlander (4-5) gave up three hits on 100 pitches for his 248th win. He struck out seven and walked one.

Chicago starter Touki Toussaint (0-3) gave up five runs and four hits in six innings.

BREWERS 5, PHILLIES 3

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—William Contreras hit a tie-breaking double in the seventh inning, and Milwaukee beat Philadelphia for its fifth win in six games.

Contreras had three hits and two RBIs for the NL Central leaders, and Blake Perkins also drove in two runs with a double. Five of Milwaukee's 10 hits were doubles.

Hoby Milner (2-0), Elvis Peguero, Joey Payamps and Devin Williams (24 saves) each pitched an inning of scoreless relief, combining for seven strikeouts and no walks.

Nick Castellanos homered for the Phillies, whose four-game winning streak was stopped. Jeff Hoffman (3-2) took the loss.

DIAMONDBACKS 5, BRAVES 3

ATLANTA (AP)—Ryne Nelson allowed only three hits in seven innings, Lourdes Gurriel Jr. hit a two-run double and Arizona dealt Atlanta its fourth straight loss.

Nelson (6-5) allowed two runs with five strikeouts in seven innings. Kyle Nelson and Kevin Ginkel each pitched a scoreless inning in relief.

Gurriel's two-run double off Charlie Morton gave Arizona a 3-1 lead in the third. Nick Ahmed drove in two runs with two hits for the Diamondbacks.

Marcell Ozuna and Austin Riley homered for NL East-leading Atlanta, which matched its longest losing streak of the season. The Braves also had four-game skids from April 19-23 and May 10-14. After going 21-4 in June, the Braves are 7-6 in July.

Morton (10-7) allowed four runs on four hits and three walks in 5 2/3 innings, ending his streak of wins in five consecutive starts.

TIGERS 3, ROYALS 2

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—Eduardo Rodriguez allowed two runs and four hits over seven dominant innings, Miguel Cabrera drove in the go-ahead run and Detroit held on to beat Kansas City.

Rodriguez (6-5) held Kansas City hitless until Matt Duffy's one-out single in the fifth. Rodriguez wound up striking out seven without allowing a walk. Alex Lange picked up his 16th save.

Javier Baez homered and Kerry Carpenter also drove in a run for the Tigers.

Kansas City's Ryan Yarbrough (2-5) allowed three runs on six hits and a walk.

CUBS 8, NATIONALS 3

CHICAGO (AP)—Nico Hoerner capped a five-run eighth inning with his first career grand slam, helping Chicago beat Washington.

Mike Tauchman also homered and drove in three runs as Chicago earned its second straight win after dropping the opener of the three-game series on Monday night. Kyle Hendricks pitched six innings of one-run ball.

Washington tied it at 3 with two runs in the top of the eighth against Julian Merryweather (3-0). Jeimer Candelario led off with his 15th homer. Consecutive two-out singles by Dominic Smith, Corey Dickerson and Luis Garcia produced another run.

Chicago bounced back in the bottom half. Yan Gomes made it 4-3 when he hit a bases-loaded sacrifice fly against Mason Thompson (3-3).

After Tucker Barnhart struck out and Tauchman walked, Hoerner greeted Cory Abbott with a drive to left-center for his sixth homer of the season.

Vingegaard takes huge lead at after dropping Pogacar in the Alps

COURCHEVEL, France (AP)—After destroying Tadej Pogacar in the race against the clock, Jonas Vingegaard dealt him the coup de grace in the Tour de France with an impressive display in the moXon course to bring the yellow jersey to Paris for a second straight year after the Danish rider took a huge lead over his main rival.

The defending champion dropped Pogacar in the last big stage in the Alps to increase his overall lead to seven minutes and 35 seconds. Barring any big crash, he looks set to win his second Tour title.

"Now to have more than seven minutes is just really incredible," Vingegaard said. "Of course the Tour de France is not over yet, I'm sure Tadej will try something on the last three stages. We're not in Paris yet."

Vingegaard finished the 17th stage in fourth place, almost six minutes before an exhausted Pogacar crossed the finish line.

The race ends in the French capital with a largely ceremonial stage on Sunday. There is just one tough stage remaining before then — on Saturday in the Alsace region, with the peloton facing a total of 3,600 meters of climbing.

But with such a big gap between the Tour's main contenders, it's unlikely to have an impact in the fight for the yellow jersey.

AP

Denmark's Jonas Vingegaard, wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey, celebrates on the podium after the seventeenth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 166 kilometers (103 miles) with start in Saint-Gervais Mont-Blanc and finish in Courchevel, France, Wednesday, July 19, 2023.

"We are in a good spot now," Vingegaard said.

Pogacar, a two-time champion who was dethroned by Vingegaard last year, lost contact about 16 kilometers (10 miles) from the finish at the ski resort of Courchevel.

The punishing trek had been dubbed the Queen Stage of this year's Tour because of its daunting profile. The last of four climbs was a 28.4-kilometer (17.6-mile) slog up Col de la Loze, close to the uphill finish.

A day after Vingegaard destroyed the field in the race's time trial, Pogacar did not find the strength to attack and got dropped in the monster climb. His teammate Marc Soler stayed with him to try and pace him back, in vain.

The day had started on a sour note for Pogacar, who crashed just a few kilometers into the 166-kilometer (103-mile) ride. The Slovenian leader of the UAE Team Emirates fell off at a moderate speed on an uphill section near the foot of the Col des Saisies after apparently touching the wheel of a rider.

Pogacar was quickly back on his bike and continued racing to rejoin the main contenders before a group of breakaway riders moved away from the pack.

Pogacar said the crash could have affected him but he did not try to find excuses.

"It hurts a little, maybe it affected my body. I just couldn't go today. It was not a good day," he said.

On paper, the punishing Col de La Loze culminating at 2,304 meters above sea level — with some slopes with a gradient more than 24% — looked like the perfect playground for a final showdown in thin air between Pogacar and Vingegaard.

But Pogacar did not have good legs, and the duel never took place.

Once Pogacar cracked, Vingegaard dropped all the riders that still accompanied him, chasing behind the remaining breakaway riders. He first joined his Jumbo-Visma teammate Wilco Kelderman and the pair soldiered on together on brutal slopes.

Vingegaard's ferocious ride amid huge crowds was briefly put to a halt by a race motorbike that was stopped in the middle of the narrow and winding road up to the summit.

At the front of the stage, Felix Gall resisted the chase to post the biggest win of his career. Simon Yates was second, with Pello Bilbao completing the stage podium.

"This whole year has been incredible. And now to do so well in the Tour de France, to win the Queen Stage, it's incredible," said Gall, a Tour debutant. "One and a half years ago I couldn't imagine I'd be in this position now."

Adam Yates kept his third place overall, 10:45 off the pace.

Vingegaard took control of the Tour during Tuesday's time trial. He had started Stage 16 only 10 seconds ahead of Pogacar after little could separate the duo in a fascinating duel over the last two weeks. However, when it came down to a head-to-head battle in the race against the clock, Vingegaard was in a class of his own.

He finished the 22.4-kilometer (14-mile) hilly route from Passy to Combloux 1:38 ahead of Pogacar.

Pogacar had his Tour de France preparations hampered by a left wrist facture he sustained in April during the Liege–Bastogne–Liege classic and required surgery. But his tremendous performances over the first two weeks of racing had erased initial doubts about his Tour form.

"Today was one of the worst days on the bike but I had to keep fighting," Pogacar said.

TEAM

From page 24

The boys 12 team of Michael Jeon and Ryan Choi also came in fourth.

Race said it meant a ton that the Oceania Tennis Federation had funding for the CNMI to add an assistant coach to this year's POJC as Colin Ramsey helped him and the youth netters plenty in Fiji.

"He did a lot as he did most of the coaching in the 12 age group in this POJC," said Race.

As for possibly beating Tahiti next year and finishing No. 1, Race said the CNMI actually did it twice in a row back in 2017 and 2018.

"It's super tough to beat Tahiti though. They have 11 private tennis clubs and they all have coaches. They also have a lot of tournaments year-round," he said.

The plethora of tennis clubs translates to more competition in the French territory and this translates to a bigger pool of tennis players to pick their junior national team or senior national team from.

Plus, Race said, Tahiti also has a funding advantage compared to tennis development in the CNMI as their administration and development staff are all paid employees.

As opposed to the CNMI, which for more than eight months had no dedicated facility to train junior players as the Pacific Islands Club Saipan was used in last year's Pacific Mini Games and was reopened only recently for national training under Race's Ace Tennis Academy.

In the intervening months, the islands' junior netters had to take their chances at public courts like the American Memorial Park tennis courts or facilities at hotels that are not exactly ideal if you're training for high-level off-island competition.

SECHARMIDAL

From page 24

Camacho, Jerald Cabrera, Jerome Delos Santos, and Joell Borja have three each.

Josenio Alvarez and Brian Camacho have three triples each; and Ben Leon Guerrero, Saralu, Harry Nakamura, Jordan Suel, and J-Boy Mendiola have two each.

As for home runs, only Devyn Flores, Henry Lizama, and Saralu have hit one each.

For RBIs, Brian Camacho leads with 14; Saralu has 13; Nathan Camacho and Poland Masaharu have 12 each; Franko Nakamura has 11; and Shane Yamada, Achilles Evangelista, and Giovanni Mira have nine each.

In the team standings, the Cardinals, Junior Nationals, Falcons, Brewers, Bears, and Blue Jays clinched a playoff spot, while the Natives, Bandits, D-9ers, Survivors, and Braves are out.

The season wrapped up its makeup games and was set to start the playoffs last night between the Falcons and Blue Jays.

10 OPEN

From page 24

uniform competition spicing up the event.

The competition will schedule two games at the Gualo Rai basketball court every day, except Sunday. The first game starts at 6pm and the second will commence at 7:30pm.

Saipan Magalahi Eagles Club president Dennis Cortez earlier said their organization is holding a basketball league to commemorate them adopting the sports venue.

He said they adopted the Gualo Rai basketball court so they can have a venue for their many basketball clinics. To this end, Saipan Magalahi Eagles Club has painted the basketball court, fixed the benches, installed lights for night games, and built a committee shed for table officials.

Entrance fee for the league is $650 and Cortez said he is still looking for sponsors for the competition.

For more information about the inaugural Magalahi Eagles basketball league, call Sonny Ebuen (670) 285-0243 or Dennis Cortez at (670) 789-5588.

YOUTH

From page 23

was to advocate and create sports programs that cater to the needs and interests of the youth. As an avid athlete myself, I understand the transformative impact that sports can have on young individuals. I initiated the Youth Summer Sports Blitz program as an opportunity to become physically active and mentally resilient individuals. The Youth Summer Sports Blitz program offers a wide range of sports clinics, coaching sessions, and friendly competitions," she said.

As for the turnout, the champion track and field athlete and bodybuilder said they are anticipating the participation of approximately 50 children in the Youth Summer Sports Blitz.

"Through our extensive promotional efforts, collaboration with local schools, and engagement with various community organizations, I have received significant interest and positive responses from both parents and potential participants," she said.

This early, Iakopo would like to thank the following agencies, organizations, and companies for helping them with the Youth Summer Sports Blitz: Saipan Mayor's Office, Run Saipan, Saipan International School, Grace Christian Academy, House of Representatives, Bridge Capital LLC, TurnKey Solutions, IT&E, Coca-Cola, TupeCane Juice, The Shack, CNMI Designs, and Saipan Nails Salon.

For more information about the Youth Summer Sports Blitz or to register, email fiakopo.youthcongress@gmail.com.

SBL

From page 23

Toros and the Twins. It will be followed at 12pm by the Blue Jays vs. the Braves and at 2:30pm, the Little Cubs will take on the Comets.

On Saturday, July 29, the Blue Jays will go up against the Comets at 9:30am; then the Little Cubs vs. the Twins at 12pm; and the Toros vs. Braves at 2:30pm.

After the round-robin games, there will be a one-game elimination for the playoffs.

SBL board member Shine Tenorio said that the tournament is a long time coming for young ball players and to get them started on playing baseball again. He said since the Saipan Little League Baseball season has been on hiatus for the past five years or so due to Super Typhoon Yutu and the COVID-19 pandemic, this tournament is a chance for them to play on the field again, which is the ultimate goal for SBL.

There are more opportunities to play baseball for CNMI's youth as the University of Guam Tritons baseball team is hosting a baseball clinic and friendship tournament at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

The clinic/friendship tourney is next Friday, July 28, from 1pm to 4pm. It's open for 16- to 21-year-olds; on Saturday, July 29, then for U12 from 9am to 11am; and for U15 from 12pm to 2pm.

SFA elated on return of 2-day international fishing tourney

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Saipan Fishermen's Association is ecstatic that after COVID-19 canceled or shortened their signature event the past two years, this year's 39th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament is back to its old two-day schedule.

SFA president Tony Scragg said their organization is excited to host more than 80 boats—mostly from Saipan and about 10 from neighboring Guam—this Saturday and Sunday from the Smiling Cove Marina.

"We're very happy that we've gotten over the COVID-19 hump. Last year was just a one-day tournament. This year we are going back to our normal two-day tournament. So it's gonna be back to normal. For two days, we'll have two full days of fishing!"

SFA

Robalo captain Ivan Ilmov and deckhand Christbino Rapugpai pose with their record-breaking 125.5-lb yellowfin tuna in last year's 38th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament at the Smiling Cove Marina.

Scragg said he's also pretty thankful to his fisherman brothers from Guam that a bunch of them are steaming to the CNMI this weekend to partake of the event despite the U.S. territory still fresh from the devastation of Typhoon Mawar.

"Even though they just went through a pretty devastating typhoon we talked to some of the guys over there and they're still keen on coming up. Their boats are okay."

The SFA will award prizes for first to third place in each of five game fish categories: Billfish, yellowfin, wahoo, mahi mahi, and skipjack. Prizes will also be awarded for total weight and grand prize for the biggest marlin.

The tournament registration cost is $150 per boat, inclusive of a captain and one crewmember. Each additional angler is $35.

Pre-registration will be held at Smiling Cove Marina on Friday, July 21, from 4pm to 6pm, where SFA will provide a tournament briefing. The tournament will begin at 6am and end at 6pm on July 22 and July 23.

The SFA will host an awards ceremony on Monday, July 24, at 6pm at Kensington Hotel Saipan. Non-tournament participants may attend for $35 per person.

The SFA will produce a souvenir tournament program booklet, to be provided to all participating captains. Tournament entry forms, rules, and schedule of events are now at the Marianas Visitors Authority office on Beach Road in Garapan and at Fishing Tackle & Sporting Goods on Beach Road, Susupe, Saipan.

"We look forward to the boaters and their crews' participation in the 39th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament this weekend. We have good prizes in store for them and we're expecting good weather. Good luck to all participants and we want them to have a fun weekend fishing," said Scragg.

Last year, captain Ivan Ilmov and the crew of *Robalo* set a new record for heaviest yellowfin tuna after reeling in a 125.5-pounder in the 38th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament.

Caught near Banzai Cliff after a close to 45-minute struggle, the prized yellowfin was caught by Ilmov and his seven-man crew made up of Christbino Rapugpai, Albert Emananpiy, Jeff Morgexa, Jordan Tagabuel, Henry Maliuwelau, Mano Piyalal, and Walter Paulus.

Due to high gas prices, last year's edition of the premiere event of the Saipan Fishermen's Association was reduced to one day and Ilmov and company made the most of it.

For more information about the 39th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament, contact MVA Community Projects specialist Ray Villagomez at (670) 664-3200 or email rvillagomez@mymarianas.com.

Youth Summer Sports Blitz to commence Monday

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Youth senator and Sports and Recreation Committee chair FilomenaLeonisa Iakopo, extreme left, poses with the rest of the 19th CNMI Youth Congress in this file photo.

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The 19th CNMI Youth Congress will be hosting the weeklong Youth Summer Sports Blitz starting this Monday at the Oleai Sports Complex.

Youth senator FilomenaLeonisa Iakopo, the chairwoman of the Sports and Recreation Committee, said the totally free program will cater to three main sports—track and field, soccer, and volleyball.

The morning session—from 8am to 12pm—will be for youth 10-13 years old, while the afternoon session—from 1pm to 5pm—will be for 14-17-year-olds.

"One sport a day involved and with a lot of fun other activities in between. The last day of the program on July 29 will be a friendly competition day and gift certificates and free T-shirts will be given away," said Iakopo.

She said the Youth Summer Sports Blitz is in line with her platform when she ran for office for the CNMI Youth Congress.

"My main goal when I became a senator under the 19th CNMI Youth Congress

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SBL U12 Baseball Tournament starts this Saturday

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The Saipan Baseball League U12 Baseball Tournament is a go for tomorrow, July 22, at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan softball field in Susupe.

There are six teams in the 9- to 12-year-old age group tourney—Toros, Blue Jays, Little Cubs, Comets, Braves, and Twins—vying for the top spot in the two-week tourney.

Tomorrow's games are set to start at 9:30am between the

See SBL on Page 22

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The Saipan Baseball League U12 Baseball Tournament will commence tomorrow as sort of a substitute to the Saipan Little League Baseball Association that has been dormant the past couple of years.

1¢ DINING SETS
3-5 Piece Sets
1¢ SOFA SETS
Sectionals & Chairs, too!
1¢ APPLIANCES
1¢ PAYS YOUR 1ST WEEK
1¢ ELECTRONICS
1¢ BEDROOM SETS & MATTRESSES
Twin, Queen, & King Sizes
43-86" 4K Smart TVs
*1¢ pays your first week's payment on new rentals. This is a rent to own transaction. You don't own the product until all rental payments are completed. Example: $9.95 x 12 months= $517.40. Some restrictions apply. See store for details.
NO CREDIT NEEDED
Middle Road 234-RENT | Chalan Kanoa 234-DIAL
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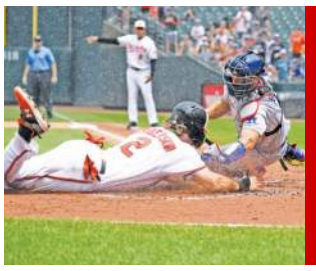

Urías, Henderson power Orioles past Dodgers and into 1st place in AL East.

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Sports

SFA elated on return of 2-day international fishing tourney.

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Team NMI finishes No. 2 in POJC

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
All age group winners in the 2023 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships pose for a group photo with officials during the awards ceremony last Wednesday in Lautoka, Fiji.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The 17-player strong CNMI team finished second overall behind powerhouse Tahiti in the 2023 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in Lautoka, Fiji.

CNMI Sports Hall of Famer and national tennis coach Jeff Race said it was an unexpected surprise considering Commonwealth netters struggled in the first couple of days of the tournament. Add to this the fact that they didn't have an actual tennis training facility for the better part of the past year.

"Just announced that the CNMI finished second among the 13 island nations in the POJC. So I guess we did awfully well after all. Tahiti was No. 1," said Race in a social media message to the *Saipan Tribune*.

The CNMI bucked a lackluster start by taking the boys 14 singles, boys 14 doubles, boys 14 doubles runner-up, boys 14 singles second runner-up, boys 16 doubles second runner-up, as well as a couple of Top 10 finishes by the CNMI's talented junior players.

At the forefront of the Commonwealth's Fiji campaign of course was La Hunn Lam who won the boys 14 singles and teamed up with Nason Wessel to take the boys 14 doubles. Wessel then took third place in the boys 14 singles.

Ryan Choi and Si Woo Lee came in second to Lam and Wessel in the boys 14 doubles, while Henry Choi and June Yu got third place in the boys 16 doubles.

Irin Chung and Hoo Wang settled for fourth place in the girls 16 doubles, while Anne Lee and Lina Tsukagoshi salvaged fifth place in the girls 14 doubles.

In the boys 16 doubles, Simon Tang tag-teamed with Cook Islands' Luke Pierre to snare sixth place.

In more singles play results, Anne Lee finished seventh in the girls 14 and Si Woo Lee took ninth in the boys 16.

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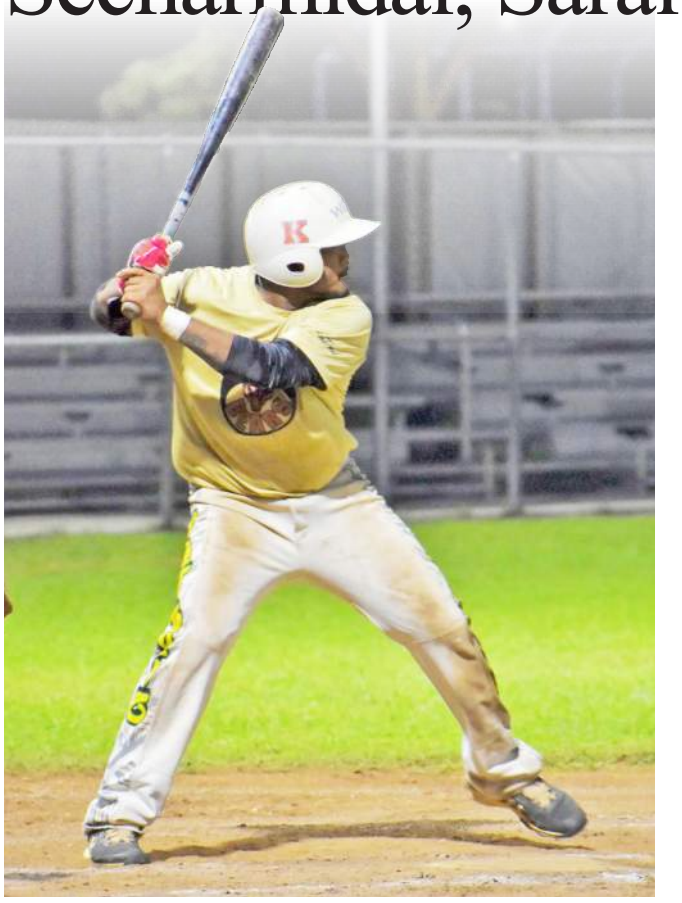
Secharmidal, Saralu still SBL leaders



LEIGH GASES
CK Bears' Virgil Secharmidal readies to swing during their game against the Blue Jays in the 2023 Tan Holdings-Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Saipan Baseball League.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

CK Bears' Virgil Secharmidal is still the pitching leader, while the Cardinals' Nokki Saralu still leads in batting average in the 2023 Tan Holdings-Saipan Baseball League as of July 16.

Secharmidal is the only pitcher with a zero earned run average, in five games, 14 innings pitched, two wins, zero earned runs, and four hits against him; second is the Cardinals' Nathan Guerrero who has a 0.99 ERA, pitched three games and 14.2 innings, has three wins, two ER, and seven hits against him; third is the Brewers' Tim Cruz with a 1.27 ERA, in five games, 22.1 innings pitched, four wins, four ER, and 20 hits against him.

Jason Reyes has the most strikeouts with 45; Isaiah Teigita and Jose Lizama Jr. are tied with 40; Kevin Kapileo has 32; Timothy Cruz is at 26; Angelo Igitol and Secharmidal are at 25 each; M.J. Sakisat has 24; R.J, Riungel has 23; and Benji Palacios has 21.

Over on the offensive side, Saralu leads with a .567 batting average from 17 hits of 30 at-bats; the Junior Nationals' J.R. Suel is at a flat .500 with 13 hits from 26 at-bats; the Cardinals' Brian Camacho is third with a .485 average and 16 for 33 at-bats.

Saralu also leads the most runs scored with 20; teammate Shane Yamada has 18; Jylon Sablan has 16; Isaiah Lizama has 14; Eli Aughenbaugh has 13; Teigita, Brian Camacho, Nathan Camacho, and Jerald Cabrera have 12 each.

Cameron Towai leads with the most doubles at five; Brian Camacho has four; J.R. Suel, Poland Masaharu, Henry Lizama, Vicente Camacho, Yamada, Saralu, Nathan

See SECHARMIDAL on Page 22

10 open, 7 masters, 4 youth teams ready to soar

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The basketball league being organized by the Saipan Magalahi Eagles Club with its sister organization, Saipan Maga'Haga Lady Eagles Club, now has a total of 25 teams signed up for its inaugural season.

MARK RABAGO
Blue Haus' Mike Aitogue shoots against Blue Eagle/Royal Pacific in the recent 2nd Annual Saipan Centennial Lions Basketball League at the Civic Center Basketball Court.

A total of 14 teams are joining the open division (18-and-over), namely Priority Care, Easy Rider, JTM Saipan, Vik Team, Loving Hands, Winners Team, Bridge Capital, The Game, Socho I, Socho II, The Rollers, Checkpoint International, CK Saints, and Agah Team.

Those vying for the championship of the masters division (40-and-over), meanwhile, include many-time masters titleist Blue Haus, JSN Construction, The Legends, Vizion Insurance, MY MP, Long Shot Team, and Samson Team.

There will be four teams taking part in the youth division (14-and-under)—all from Dexter Tenorio's MadFlex Hoops. He said they're still looking for sponsors to bankroll the four teams.

Commissioner Sonny Ebuen said the Magalahi Eagles basketball league will have an opening ceremony on Aug. 6 with the customary parade of teams, which includes a best muse and best

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